

TODAY

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CONFESIONS OF AN MP'S WIFE

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Police may face Bridgewater trial

Cheers in court for freedom after 18 lost years

BY RICHARD FORD AND STEPHEN FARRELL

TWO former police officers may face criminal charges after three men jailed for murdering Carl Bridgewater were freed yesterday amid allegations of "serious, substantial and widespread police malpractice".

The detectives allegedly forged a confession which was instrumental in bringing the men to trial and sending them to prison for 18 years, and yesterday the Crown accepted that newly discovered scientific evidence left the prosecution case "fundamentally flawed".

Tumultuous applause and cheering greeted Vincent Hickey, his cousin Michael and James Robinson as they appeared in the dock at the Court of Appeal. They were released on unconditional bail pending a full hearing in April, when their convictions will almost certainly be quashed. Patrick Molloy, who was convicted with them, died in prison in 1981 still protesting his innocence.

After the hearing, as the Prime Minister said that he expected an inquiry into the original convictions and within the West Midlands police, the men denounced the criminal justice system.

Vincent Hickey, still wearing prison clothes, told a press conference: "Not only have the police been devious and deceitful by keeping innocent men in prison, far worse, after having a child killed, they have deceived Mr and Mrs Bridgewater."

The men's freedom hinged on the discovery this month of scientific evidence proving for the first time the existence of the bogus confession statement, purportedly made by Vincent Hickey but apparently concocted by the police, which Molloy had claimed was used to trick him into

admitting the crime. Without Molloy's confession, the Crown would have had no case, Lord Justice Roth said yesterday.

Later, Robinson renewed the attack on the West Midlands police. "It was not a case of one rotten apple in the barrel, they were all rotten. You had to be rotten to get into the barrel. It wasn't about over-zealous policemen thinking they had the right guys, it was a concerted conspiracy."

One of the three officers named in court, Graham Leake, now works as a security guard. He refused to comment on the Court of Appeal hearing at which the police operation was branded "dishonest and deceitful". Another of the officers allegedly involved, Detective Constable John Perkins, died two years ago.

Michael Mansfield, QC, for Molloy, said: "It is only a small part of serious substantial and widespread police malpractice involving a number of very high-ranking officers down to the lowest, who must have been involved in what was going on."

He said that the particular ground of Molloy's confession meant that the convictions were unsafe. Lord Justice Roth said that he had no reason to believe the convictions would not be quashed.

After the hearing, Vincent Hickey yesterday paid tribute to his own and Michael Hickey's mothers for the way they campaigned for their release. Robinson said that Anne Skeet and Ann Whelan should be rewarded in the New Year's Honours list. "The problem for the West Midlands police force was that they happened to fit up Ann Whelan's son," he said. "They got a tiger by the tail." Vincent Hickey added:



Freedom at last: Ann Whelan (left) hugs her son Michael Hickey outside the High Court. Beside them are Anne Skeet with her son Vincent Hickey and Jimmy Robinson

ed: "We are fortunate. Me and Mike have got the best mum in the world."

Robinson said that only Mrs Whelan had kept up their spirits: "That woman there is four foot and she and our solicitor have told people who didn't want to know. They were long lonely years, we have cried with despair and people have looked at us with contempt in their eyes for killing a kid. I am not bitter long. This is not new evidence, it is stuff that has been there from day one."

Nick Molloy, the son of Patrick Molloy, said: "I feel very sad. It's great to see these men today. I salute the heroes — these men. They have courage, true courage. Look at

poor old Hanratty, and Iris Bentley who has just died. If the hang-em-all brigade had had their way, we wouldn't be here today."

Mrs Whelan was glad that the battle was over, but she remained angry that the men had suffered years of mental and physical abuse. "I was very much on my own for years," she said. "But I just fought and fought and fought. The worst time was when people refused to listen. The authorities knew they were innocent, but they didn't want to hear. There is still a lot of fighting to be done, but Michael now needs time to think."

Order of freedom, page 6
Detective silent, page 7
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Key evidence was hidden for years

BY RICHARD FORD AND STEPHEN FARRELL

THE crucial evidence that led to the release of the Bridgewater Three lay undiscovered in their files for seven years until their solicitor found it two weeks ago.

A confession statement by Patrick Molloy taken in Wombourne police station in December 1978 was subjected to Electrostatic Document Analysis (Esa) by the forensic scientists Robert Radley and Dr Anthony Hardcastle in 1990. But they found no sign that the statement had been tampered with. Esa can

show if documents have been tampered with or reveal impressions left from earlier sheets of paper — technology not available when the men were sentenced — but the only imprints the scientists found were consistent with those that one would expect to find on a document taken from a stack of witness statements.

"They found impressions of a familiar capitol which one finds at the beginning of every statement under caution. There was nothing in the least surprising about finding that there, Jeremy Roberts, QC, for the Crown, said yesterday. Most of the imprints had

disappeared with handling over the years, but a few words were protected by the exhibit label on the front page. They showed that the statement whose imprint appeared on the document had been in the name of Vincent Hickey and carried his signature.

Molloy, whose confession was crucial to the conviction of all the men, has always insisted that he was tricked into his admission when the police showed him a confession allegedly made by Hickey.

What Radley and Hardcastle did not know was that Hickey was interviewed in Redditch police station, 25 miles away from Molloy, and any statement he made could not have been written on the same pad as Molloy's.

The importance of the
Continued on page 7, col 8

Anger as German paper refers to 'the Jew Rifkind'

BY ROGER BOYES IN BERLIN AND PHILIP WEBSTER

A GERMAN newspaper which is closely aligned to Helmut Kohl, yesterday stood by its description of the Foreign Secretary as "the Jew Rifkind" and the writer of the article expressed amazement that the words could have been interpreted as a slur.

As a storm of protest greeted the remark in the solemn *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, its author defended his choice of words. "Is it an insult

in English to call somebody a Jew? Michaela Wiesel, the newspaper's 28-year-old specialist on European affairs, asked. "I am mortified that anyone could have read it like this."

The Prime Minister was urged to lodge a complaint after MPs from all parties branded the description of Malcolm Rifkind by the paper as an insult to him and to the country.

The offending words came at the end of an even-handed account of Mr Rifkind's speech to the Konrad Adenauer Institute in Bonn: "As if he was not completely convinced by his own words, the Jew Rifkind concluded — ironically, apologetically — with a quote from Luther, delivered in German, 'Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise.'"

Mr Rifkind's Foreign Office speechwriters used the words to underline the force of the Foreign Secretary's convictions. But the newspaper read the quotation differently: as a coded protest against the words (urging Germany to abandon its federal European ambitions) that he had just spoken.

Ms Wiesel said, "I was only

trying to underline how surprising it was that somebody who is Jewish should quote the leading German Protestant reformer."

Mr Rifkind's family left Lithuania in 1899. Although the use of the expression "the Jew" is not as jarring in German as in English, nonetheless it has a strange ring, especially for older readers. Nazi newspapers in the 1930s prefaced almost any description of leading liberal politicians with "the Jew" even if the person had long ago abandoned his religion.

"The point of course is that Mr Rifkind, even when quoting Martin Luther, was speaking as British Foreign Secretary and not as a Jew, Catholic or Buddhist," said a senior British official who attended the lecture. "The real question is why [the newspaper] allowed such a phrase to stay in their columns."

At least two of the newspaper's board of publishers are regarded as tough conservatives who can on occasion be deeply critical of British politics and the British media. A year ago the newspaper published

Continued on page 2, col 5



Times man wins top BBC award

Sam Kiley, Africa correspondent of *The Times*, was named Foreign Correspondent of the Year yesterday at the BBC's *What the Paper's Say Awards*. Mr Kiley, 32, who joined *The Times* as a trainee in 1987, was commended for his reports from Rwanda. The judges praised "the chastening clarity of his reports from one of the world's least manageable zones".

Smuggler jailed

The pregnant daughter of a prominent businessman was jailed for 11 years yesterday for trying to smuggle cocaine worth £400,000 into Britain. Sara Westwood, 23, wept as Judge Oppenheimer told her she had taken part in a "disgusting and terrible" trade.

Surrey go into bat under floodlights

BY SIMON WILDE

ONE-DAY cricket is about to undergo a revolution in England if, as expected, proposals by Surrey are approved by the English Cricket Board.

Surrey, the third oldest county club in the country, whose patron is The Queen and whose most noted supporter is the Prime Minister, want to change their name to the *Surrey Lions*, play pop music between overs and stage a match under floodlights in the Sunday 40-overs league. They expect other clubs to follow suit.

The inspiration came from David Gilbert, the club's coach, who has seen similar marketing ploys used to good effect in his native Australia. Surrey won the league title last year and saw their home attendances rise from 4,000 to nearly 10,000 and they believe that they have the team to attract larger crowds still.

"We have spent the winter researching and planning means of attracting a wider audience to limited overs cricket," Paul Sheldon, Surrey's chief executive, said yesterday. "The current Surrey team, brimming with internationals, is highly marketable and our new initiatives will give young supporters an easy

means of identifying with their heroes."

For their plans to stage the first floodlit match between first-class counties, at the Oval on Wednesday, June 26, Surrey have already received the ECB's blessing. Their opponents will be Nottinghamshire, who agreed to the fixture being brought forward by four days and to the county championship match, due to start that day, being postponed for 48 hours.

The game would probably start at 5pm and finish at 10. The floodlights would be switched on when necessary, depending on the weather.

Although the prospect of the defending champions meeting last year's league runners-up should be an enticing prospect, Surrey had originally approached Yorkshire but they declined the floodlit fixture. The Nottinghamshire match clashes with the first week of Wimbledon tennis but Surrey hope to attract an attendance approaching the ground capacity of 17,000.

Alec Stewart, Surrey's captain, who is with the England touring team in New Zealand, said: "I think one-day cricket should be jazzed up. We want to attract more people."

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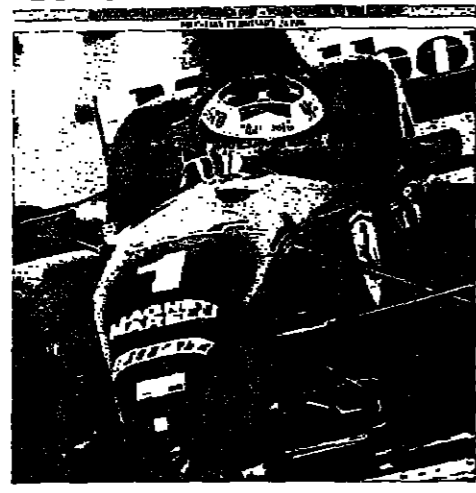
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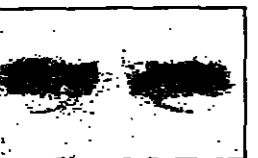
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BALLOT '97

Your essential guide to the key election issues
On Monday: Welfare reform

Significant shift by Labour leftwinger

WHEN the history of new Labour is written, David Blunkett's Birmingham lecture, in which he rejected the socialist principle of redistributing wealth from the rich to the poor, will be regarded as a key landmark in the abandonment of "old" Labour.

What was so interesting about this particular speech was the explicit terms in which he rejected cash transfers as the means to reduce social divisions. Even Gordon Brown, the leading ideologist of new Labour, has been

more guarded in expressing this view.

Just as significant as the content is that Mr Blunkett's roots are on the Labour left, among the strongest supporters of the views that he now rejects. It was hardly surprising that his former allies on the Tribune left were the most vocal in attacking his lecture, and his most prominent defender was Frank Field, who has been outspoken in urging a new approach.

Redistribution from wealth to poor through the tax

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

and benefits system has been a central Labour programme for most of this century, reflected in a series of measures extending welfare provision. But the resistance of skilled workers to paying higher taxes played a part in Labour's defeat in 1979 and voters' worries over its tax plans have ensured that the party has remained in opposition. Mr Blunkett acknowledged that the world has

changed dramatically so this approach would no longer work. "In 1992, the British people rejected the notion that government should claw back cash in order to transfer that cash to others through pension and child benefit changes which they could not see as being directly beneficial to themselves and their families... Cash transfers are no longer an option, either politically or economic-

cally, in the way envisaged 50 or 100 years ago. The international money markets, the electronic transfer of funds, and the aspiration of a massively growing middle class, make the realities very different from a bygone era," he said.

Instead of this redistributive approach, the Shadow Education and Employment Secretary argued that "the only way of enabling people to rise out of poverty and disadvantage, is by enabling them to earn their own living,

to be adequately rewarded, and to have the opportunity to succeed". Hence, his emphasis on education and training, self-help and self-reliance. This is a long way from the Tory approach since it still implies an activist government. But it is not socialism as it has been defined by every Labour leader up to Tony Blair and is still advocated by many of Mr Blunkett's Shadow Cabinet colleagues.

PETER RIDDELL

Labour plans to send Blair video to new voters

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR is taking his general election campaign directly into tens of thousands of homes with a starring role in the first video general election broadcast.

The video, which is under lock and key at Labour Party headquarters, will be sent unsolicited to carefully targeted first-time and floating voters in 80 marginal seats. It is the first time the technique has been tried in a British election campaign and is further evidence of the increasingly sophisticated vote-seeking operation by the major political parties.

Labour strategists have already christened the film, Blair the Video, in a reference to the Hugh Hudson party political broadcast of Neil and Glenys Kinnock. The broadcast, which became known as Kinnock the Movie in the 1987 general election, was such a success it was repeated during the campaign.

Conservative Central Office, momentarily thrown on to the defensive by the latest innovation by the Labour campaign team, hit back. An official said last night "We welcome it. We have a different name for it. It will be a Nightmare on Blair Street. The more people exposed to Tony Blair the better for us."

The Tories have no such plans to put Mr Major on a

John Major will open up a new election front today by pledging the appointment of "hit squads" to force the sale of empty council homes. Government inspectors would go to council housing departments which have more than 3 per cent of their housing stock vacant, and order the sale of all homes which have been empty for more than a year. The plan, modelled on that for sending in inspectors to take over failing schools, is likely to feature in the Tory manifesto to highlight the alleged housing failures of Labour-run councils. The Prime Minister will be speaking at a Tory local government rally in Birmingham.

personal video. They are putting him on a soapbox instead. "We think the tried and tested methods of political debate are much more effective," the official added.

But Labour is undaunted by the criticism. The film, which will be accompanied by a letter from Mr Blair addressed to the individual target voters, is thought to have cost at least £100,000. It has been produced in conjunction with BMP, the party's adver-

tising agency. The party is waging the most high-tech election campaign so far having created a web site on the Internet and satellite links. Mr Blair has also taken part in telephone phone-ins.

A Labour strategist said: "We are now developing the use of videos which can be interactive with CD-ROMs. The Blair video is the culmination of our efforts. We will target 80 marginal seats with the video. They are the seats where the Tory and Liberal Democrat support is soft and we think the seat is up for grabs. The video is about transmitting a positive message from Tony Blair into people's living rooms."

The strategy is also intended to improve Mr Blair's personal standing with women voters after some opinion poll research suggested that mature women thought John Major was more sincere. Chris Smith, the Shadow Health Secretary, announced a six-point plan to improve patient care and increase rewards for nurses to reduce the numbers leaving the health service. He planned to introduce more flexible working hours, long-term job security and better pay in return for extra training. He also proposed to end local pay bargaining and extend the opportunities to prescribe GP.

An election roadshow intended to focus politicians' attention on the voting power of Britain's ten million old age pensioners was launched outside the House of Commons. Age Concern's campaign message is "Age counts. Ten million older voters could make the difference."



The late Veronica Guerin's son with Russell Davies

Guerin is named journalist of year

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

VERONICA GUERIN, crime correspondent for the Irish *Sunday Independent*, who was killed last June, was named Journalist of the Year yesterday. The *What the Papers Say* award was collected by her son, Cathal, aged seven, and her husband Graham Turley.

In a tribute to his mother delivered with extraordinary composure, Cathal said: "I am very honoured to accept this wonderful award on behalf of my wonderful mum... this award I will cherish for ever. Thank you very much indeed." Russell Davies introduced the awards.

The awards were presented by Tony Blair at the Savoy Hotel in London. The *Guardian* won the Newspaper of the Year award. The judges com-

mended the paper's investigations such as those into the relationship between the Tory MP Neil Hamilton and the lobbyist Ian Greer. The Scoop of the Year Award went to Peter Hounam, a freelance reporter who obtained leaked details of the 1996 Budget.

Francis Wheen, of *The Guardian*, was named Columnist of the Year. Polly Toynbee, of *The Independent*, won the Commentator of the Year award. Brian Viner, television critic at the *Mail on Sunday*, won the Peter Black Award for Broadcasting Writer of the Year. The Gerald Barry Award for a career's achievement went to Sir John Junor, who edited the *Sunday Express* for 32 years.

Award for Times man, page 1

Bullying case settled by Army

A former lieutenant who claimed she was driven out of the Army by bullies yesterday won a personal apology from the Ministry of Defence. Alisa Cook, from Winchester, whose claim centred on a year with the 39 field regiment based in Paderborn, also won an out-of-court settlement, believed to be several thousand pounds, three days before she was due to be the first woman officer to sue the Army for sexual discrimination at an industrial tribunal. She said she was locked in a shower room while CS gas pellets were set off. The Army has not admitted liability for discrimination or harassment.

Bug toll rises

A fourth person who ate traditional haggis at a Burns Supper at Robertson village hall near Hawick in the Scottish Borders on February 7 has been confirmed as suffering from the lethal *E. coli* 0157 bacterium. The latest victim takes the total number of confirmed cases in the area to six.

Link ruled out

Police seeking the killer of Billie-Jo Jenkins have discounted the possibility that one of the suspects is the man wanted for the murder of Lin Russell and her daughter Megan in Kent. A man, 36, was released on police bail yesterday after being questioned about the murder of Billie-Jo, 13, in Hastings.

Pupil stabbed

A 15-year-old boy is critically ill after being stabbed in the corridor of his school by another pupil. Darren Hopper, a pupil at Heathfield High School in Congleton, Cheshire, was attacked during break time. Cheshire Police said that a 14-year-old pupil had been detained and was awaiting interview.

Yorks' ski trip

The Duke and Duchess of York, who were divorced last year, are spending the weekend together at the Swiss ski resort of Verbier with their children Beatrice, eight, and Eugenie, aged six. The Duchess has been staying at a friend's chalet on a half-term break, and her ex-husband flew there last night.

Changes in Army manpower announced on Thursday (report, yesterday), which will increase the size of the Parachute Regiment but reduce overall manning by 600, will save, not cost, up to £15 million a year.

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Hard-up Lib Dems hope that voters will follow the van

By POLLY NEWTON, POLITICAL REPORTER

THE Liberal Democrats are taking a gamble to pay for a national advertising campaign before election day. They have spent half of their £2.5 million fighting fund already and will be able to afford only very limited advertising in regional media covering their target seats.

Their financial plight was underlined yesterday when Paddy Ashdown unveiled a new Liberal Democrat campaign poster in London. It was posted to a billboard-carrying van that was hired for £2,000 and had to be back at the rental company's Oxfordshire

headquarters by last night. The party spent another £2,000 on producing two copies of the poster - one for each side of the van - although the design work was done for nothing by a "creative team" of Liberal Democrat supporters. After a photocall at 10.30am, the van was driven back to Oxfordshire via some target seats in London in the hope that the poster would be spotted by potential Liberal Democrat voters.

Lord Holme of Cheltenham, the Liberal Democrats' election campaign chairman,

admitted: "For those who know Maccen, it is 'the Birmam Wood approach'."

The Tories have spent an estimated £5 million on their latest poster campaign alone.

The Liberal Democrats estimate that by polling day they will have spent a total of £5 million on nationally co-ordinated campaigning in the past five years. They cannot afford to rent any billboard sites, nor will they be sending leaflets or newsletters through the post to voters in target seats. They will rely on activists pounding the pavements.

Frankfurter Allgemeine 'Jew Rifkind' anger

Continued from page 1 lished a long front-page commentary criticising *The Times* and *The Guardian* for blaming an arson attack on a foreigners' hostel on neo-Nazis. Other commentaries have sharply attacked British policy in the Balkans and the Major Government's record on Eu-

couple of years ago, increasingly slips into radio and television reports of international matches.

Although ministers declined to become embroiled, senior MPs were furious. Gerald Kaufman, the former Shadow Foreign Secretary, said: "It is disgusting. I was absolutely appalled when I saw it. Words fail me. I cannot express my irritation strongly enough. The Prime Minister should do something about it."

A member of the British Government has been attacked in a German newspaper and I find that appalling."

Sir Ivan Lawrence, the Tory MP and a member of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, said: "The Germans ought to apologise without being asked. It stirs up our worst forebodings about Jewish political union with Germany. I expect John Major will demand an apology."

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Businessman's daughter weeps as judge condemns 'disgusting, terrible' crime.

Pregnant drug smuggler sentenced to 11 years

BY KATHRYN KNIGHT

THE pregnant daughter of a prominent businessman was jailed for 11 years yesterday for trying to smuggle cocaine worth £400,000 into Britain.

Sara Westwood, 23, whose father is Roger Westwood, the managing director of financial company Hogg Robinson, wept as Judge Oppenheimer told her she had taken part in a "disgusting and terrible" trade that led to destruction and death. Her parents and two sisters, who attended every day of her two-and-a-half-week trial, sat in shock as she was sentenced.

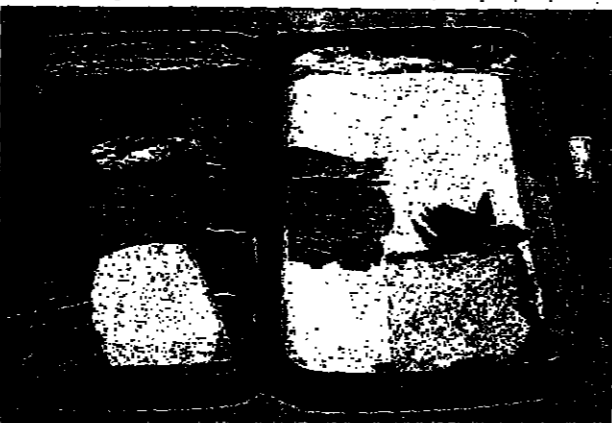
Westwood was caught as she brought more than two kilograms of cocaine hidden in the false bottom of her suitcase through the green channel at Heathrow airport last April. She was part of a "large and sophisticated" ring of smugglers, which included three accomplices who were sentenced alongside her yesterday at Isleworth Crown Court.

The court was told Westwood had accepted a free holiday to Trinidad last year and had stayed at a Holiday Inn in the capital, Port of Spain. On April 8, police at Tobago airport watched as she checked in a suitcase. Some distance behind her, Anthony Walker, an accomplice, was carrying a similar case. The two ignored each other but were later seen talking.

They were shadowed by Lancelotti Wallace and Cedric Edwards, both from Lewisham, southeast London, who acted as minders to see the bags safely into Britain. Westwood and Walker tried to disguise their route to Britain by travelling from Trinidad via Frankfurt but police had already been alerted and sniffer dogs at Frankfurt airport discovered the 4.6 kg of cocaine divided between



Roger Westwood and his wife Susan attended every day of their daughter's trial. She smuggled cocaine into Britain in the suitcase below



Westwood's and Walker's suitcases.

The group were followed to Heathrow airport, where Customs officers arrested them.

Giving evidence, Westwood told the court that she had had no idea that there were drugs in the suitcase, which was packed by someone else while she was in the shower.

While in the Caribbean, the

court was told, she had written a postcard to her best friend talking of "Geezers, gear, gorgeous gals and big ones".

Westwood was convicted last month after pleading not guilty. Yesterday in mitigation her counsel, Bernard Phelvin, said that she was a gullible and foolish girl who was easily led and had found it difficult to make friends. "She was a

lonely and desperate asthmatic child, finding it difficult to make friends perhaps in the way that teenagers and children do. Compromising her values was a way to achieve what popularity she could among her friends because of her background."

He said she had "dropped out" at a fairly early age and had also suffered violent abuse from her boyfriend. "Throughout this, those who are near to her have been and will be deeply affected by these matters."

"They have nevertheless stayed by her throughout. If it is possible at all not wholly to crush her spirit and destroy her personality, that is the course the court should take."

Judge Oppenheimer said he had taken into account her personal circumstances at the time she was lured into the smuggling trade. "In particular, I have considered your personal history, your background, the abusive relationships that you had had before this offence was committed and the depression that you suffered," he said.

Nonetheless, he said, she was a "knowing" courier. He sentenced Tony Walker, 31, who pleaded guilty, to seven years in prison. Lancelotti Wallace, 25, and Cedric Edwards, 34, were jailed for 12 years and 11 years respectively.

Westwood's mother Susan wept as her daughter was led away. The Westwoods have always maintained their daughter's innocence and say she was unknowingly lured into smuggling.

Westwood was educated at St Joseph's Convent School for Girls in Reading, Berkshire, which pledges to help girls "grow to maturity as Christians". She passed nine GCSEs but left aged 16.

When she married in her



Ex-convent girl Sara Westwood: claimed she was duped into carrying drugs

late teens, her father gave his blessing and threw a huge white wedding for her. She started training to become a nurse but gave it up when she became pregnant with her son Rees in 1994. Shortly afterwards her marriage collapsed and the couple separated in 1995.

Westwood then went to live

in a £70-a-week bedsit in Reading. Soon she was mixing with the crowd that was to lead to her downfall.

Her parents are now looking after their grandson at the family home in Sulham, Berkshire. After the verdict was announced last month, Mr Westwood told journalists he believed his daughter was the

innocent dupe of others. He said: "Sometimes naive, silly, headstrong and feckless, yes; but her main problem is that she has always been too trusting of the wrong type of people. Personally I have no doubt that she was taken advantage of." He and his family were too upset to comment after the sentence.

French girls vanish on day trip to London

BY LIN JENKINS

THE distraught families of two French girls were helping to search West End streets in London yesterday in the hope of spotting the 16-year-olds, who went missing during a day trip from their home village.

The girls' visit on Wednesday was their first trip away from Grenay, near Lille. Police are worried that they may have been held against their will, but hope that the reason may prove less sinister. The attractions of the capital may have prompted them to miss the coach home. An incident room has been set up in Earls Court Road.

Laetitia Ranson and Anjelique Wozniak speak only a smattering of English. They had £10 each and no change of clothes when they failed to catch the coach home from Hanover Square. They were last seen about 4pm, window-shopping in Oxford Circus.

Marie-Christine Wozniak, 39, her husband Noel, 44, and their neighbours Jeanine, 43, and Jacky Ranson, 48, came to London on Thursday night. Mr Wozniak said: "We can't stop thinking about them. We wish to get out and walk the streets just to find our daughters."

A police spokesman said: "We are very concerned about them. They have never gone missing before and to deliberately run off would be out of character. We hope they just wanted to carry on with their adventure, but they may have been picked up by some of the unscrupulous people who watch for stray youngsters."

The girls are not thought to have fallen out with their families, nor did they have English boyfriends or girlfriends that they might have tried to visit. Both girls are white, about 5ft 2ins and fairly heavily built. Laetitia has shoulder-length black hair, while Anjelique has silver-blond hair and wears glasses.

Nigerians free Briton held for eight weeks

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

A BRITISH accountant imprisoned for eight weeks in Nigeria without charge was expected home today after intense diplomatic pressure ended his ordeal.

Bruce Henderson, 42, was released wearing the same clothes he wore when he was arrested by Nigerian military police in December on suspicion of spying as he attempted to cross the border from Cameroon. He was expected to fly out of Lagos last night to be reunited with his wife and three children in Aberdeenshire.

The British High Commission in Lagos reported that he seemed to be in good health. He told officials that he had been treated well during his detention.

Last night Mr Henderson told the BBC: "I am delighted to be free and I am grateful to those who helped to sustain me during this difficult time and those who have worked very hard to secure my release."

Hopes had risen last Friday that he would be freed, but

were dashed. From the time of his arrest he was refused access to consular officials.

Mr Henderson's wife Carol, 38, speaking from the family home in Chapel of Garioch, near Inverurie, said: "I'm so happy. I can't believe it — it has come from nowhere. After all the disappointment of the last week, it's wonderful."

Mrs Henderson was told by the Foreign Office at 11am yesterday that her husband was free and she was able to speak to him for the first time in almost two months, by telephone to the High Commission in Lagos. "He said he was well. He is very confused, but is looking forward to coming home. He was really surprised when I told him about how much the case had been in the news. He had no idea about the publicity," she said.

"We built up our hopes so much last week and then had such a huge let-down. I really wasn't expecting anything to happen so soon."

She immediately broke the good news to the couple's

children. Moira, 12, Craig, ten and Lindsay, seven.

Mr Henderson had been working in Cameroon since last July as the financial controller at Korup National Park. He was employed as an accountant by Hunting Technical Services, of Hemel Hempstead. When he was arrested, he was crossing the border into Nigeria to visit friends in Port Harcourt.

Speaking by telephone yesterday to his employer, Tom Boyd, a director at Hunting Technical Services, Mr Henderson said that he had been travelling with a Nigerian businessman by boat through the Bakassi peninsula, when he and his companion were arrested. "The military police thought he might be a security risk to Nigeria having travelled through an area disputed by the two countries," Mr Boyd said.

John Wattam, at the British High Commission in Lagos, said Mr Henderson had seen a doctor and had been debriefed by officials.

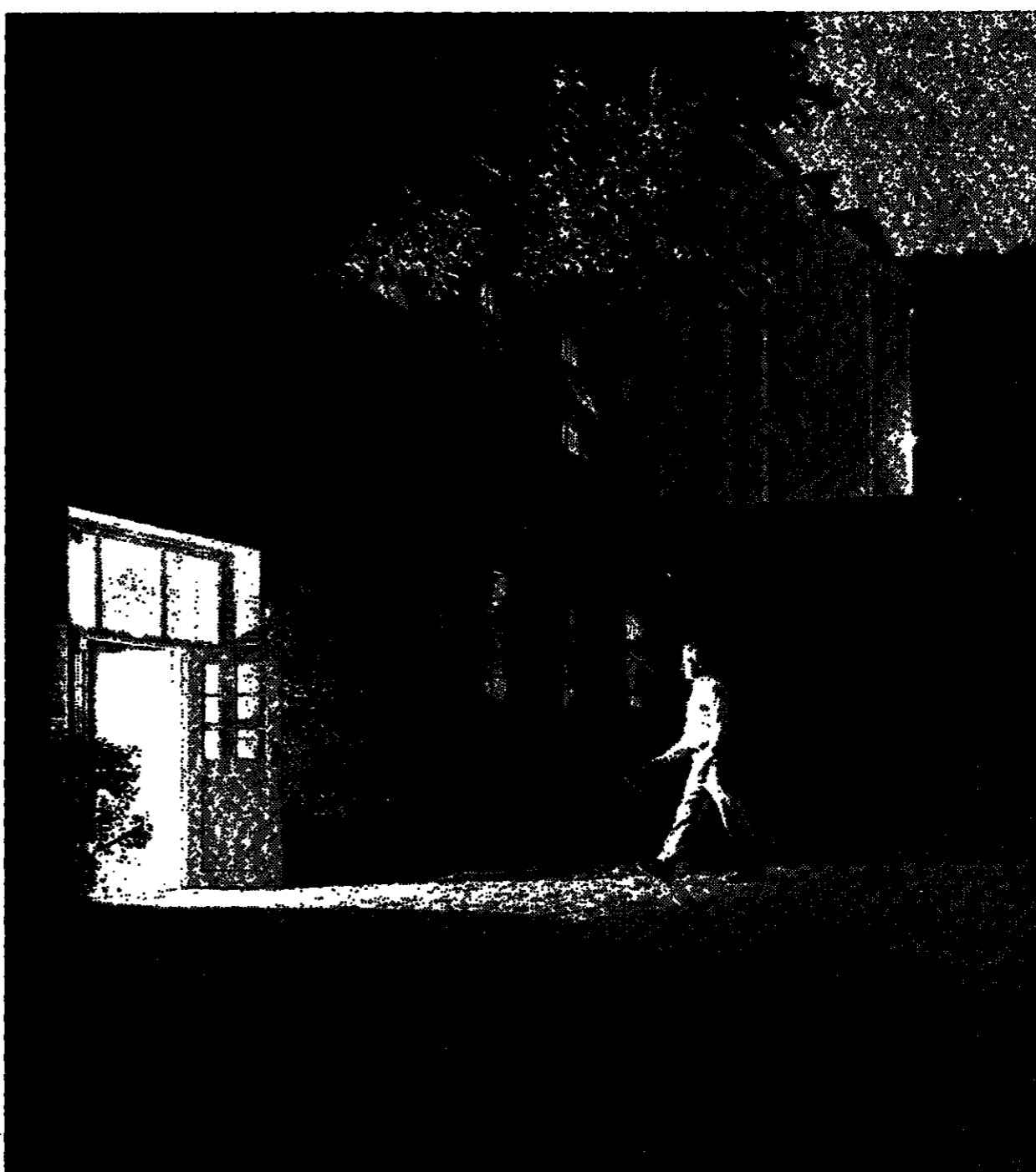
BT told to put call girls back on line

BT WAS ordered yesterday to reconnect the telephone lines of prostitutes who leave cards in phone kiosks advertising their services. The telecommunications company had joined forces with other telephone providers and Westminster City Council, central London, last August to block calls to numbers listed on the cards.

The action was aimed at preventing prostitutes plastering booths with the cards, which often included explicit details. But the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) ruled that the agreement between the telephone providers breached competition laws because it had not been registered in advance.

David Greene, solicitor for the London Committee of Call Girls, said: "BT appears willing to do as it pleases in relation to customers and their rights."

A BT spokesman described the ruling as a blip and said that the company would resume disconnections soon after registering its policy with the OFT.



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Protest led by inventor's daughter halts £1m sale of Marconi archive

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

PLANS to auction the Marconi collection of historic documents and artefacts from the early days of radio have been shelved after protests led by Marconi's daughter, Princess Elettra Marconi-Giovanelli.

GEC-Marconi has reconsidered its decision to sell the collection at Christie's next month and the auction house has suspended printing of the catalogue. The company chose to sell the collection after deciding that building a museum to store and display it would cost far more than it was worth. The sale was expected to raise £1 million.

Opposition to the sale quickly grew in a flurry of letters to *The Times*. The principal criticism was that an auction would disperse the collection and make it inaccessible to scholars and the public.

An alternative to dispersal involving the Science Museum and perhaps other museums is now being discussed, with those close to the negotiations confident that a solution can be reached.

Princess Marconi-Giovanelli, who is in England to continue the campaign to keep the collection in Britain, has met Sir Neil Cossons, director of the Science Museum, and yesterday visited Chelmsford in Essex, where her father established the Marconi company to exploit his patents. She had a meeting at the offices of the borough council and later visited the GEC-Marconi plant.

She said: "The Science Museum is being very helpful. I am hoping that everything will go well, thanks to the pressure of opinion against the sale. My father's equipment belongs to England, and that is where it should stay."

The Science Museum and GEC issued a statement after the first meeting, saying that they believed that a basis existed for a solution "which will ensure that the Marconi Collection remains intact and in this country." Another statement was promised once further progress had been



Princess Elettra Marconi-Giovanelli campaigning in Britain

achieved, "when the company would expect to be in a position to withdraw the collection from public sale." That is not expected for a week or two.

Any solution short of selling the collection is likely to involve the injection of money from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Christie's, which has already spent time cataloguing the collection, will need to be reimbursed.

Guglielmo Marconi came to Britain as a young man in 1896, after carrying out successful radio experiments in his parents' home in Italy. He was supported by the Post Office and within a few years had demonstrated long-range transmission of radio waves.

The collection owned by GEC-Marconi has been stored at Chelmsford for many years. Documents include "Marconigrams" sent by the doomed liner *Titanic* as it sank in the north Atlantic after hitting an iceberg in 1912. The final message read: "Sinking. We are putting passengers off in small boats. Weather clear."

The invention of radio is a confusing subject. Several scientists demonstrated the transmission of radio waves, but none was able to commercialise the invention until Marconi arrived from Bologna. His success was rapid, with the first radio signals being sent across the English Channel in 1898, and across the Atlantic in 1901. He won the Nobel Prize for physics in 1909.

هكذا من راصد

Catwalk kittens take controversy in their stride



Uniform appearance: Eva Arnold, left, and Charlene O'Haire dressed in their school clothes

BY DAREH GREGORIAN AND GRACE BRADBERRY

SCHOOLGIRLS who will star in Vivienne Westwood's fashion show tomorrow — one of them as young as 13 — are not letting controversy wear them down.

While Lady Olga Maidland, the MP and a sponsor of the Conservative Family Campaign, said that 20 girls aged 13 to 17 acting as models was "frankly not right", 15-year-old Eva Arnold maintained there was no cause for alarm.

While some of Ms Westwood's designs were, Eva agreed, "quite raunchy", the clothes in which she would appear for the start of London Fashion Week were not Ms Westwood, who is known for provocative designs, including rubber skirts and fake-fur G-strings, will feature the girls in a mock debutantes' ball at the Dorchester.

The girls were recruited from model agencies and two drama schools, the Sylvia Young Theatre School and The Arts Educational School, London.

Charlotte, the 13-year-old, is a professional model chosen from the books of Spirit Model Agency, which also represents Jodie Kidd, whose extremely thin appearance caused comment two years ago.

Jonathan Phang, who manages Charlotte and Jodie Kidd, said:

"The reason I'm letting her do this show is because all the girls who are doing it are young."

Eva's fellow pupils from The Arts Educational School, Sarah Watkins, 17, and Charlene O'Haire, 16, said there was no need for controversy. Eva's mother Lynn said that she was delighted Eva was in the show, although she admitted that she had had some worries.

"It's a concern when your daughter is quite young," Mrs Arnold said. "My main concern is that it focuses on image more than spirit and soul. Young people are under a terrible pressure when it comes to image. But I trust Eva. I think she's sensible."

Westwood's show comes after complaints that the fashion industry exploits schoolgirls. Lady Olga, MP for Sutton and Cheam, said: "I totally disapprove of young girls being used for this kind of show. To abuse teenagers because they look innocent is frankly not right. There are perfectly suitable adult models, so there is just no need for this. I think it's quite awful."

Wayne Hemingway, the chairman and founder of the fashion company Red Or Dead, which is also showing at the fashion week, said: "It's a question of where you draw the line. I think the collection that Vivienne is showing is

for young people, and so using young models is perfectly all right. The only time there would be a problem is if young girls were wearing clothes that were sexy or exposing flesh or midriff."

Lella Cerullo, a spokeswoman for the Ms Westwood, said: "We're not putting the girls into the show to cause a sensation. We want to prove a point that a young girl can look chic and sophisticated. Young people love to dress like rebels, but they all wind up dressing like each other. These days, looking prim is rebellious." Miss Cerullo said the girls would wear "lovely tailored suits".

However, Westwood's managing director, the Italian businessman Carlo D'Amario, said: "The collection is very sexy. What else do you expect of Vivienne?"

For the audition, the girls of The Arts Educational School were asked to wear dance leotards and to walk the length of the school hall. Brenda Gray, the school's registrar, said the show's organisers wanted girls between the ages of 14 and 18. "They wanted tall, slim, typical English rose types. As long as the clothing is suitable, it will be a good experience for them."

Vivienne Westwood made her name in the 1970s, when she and her partner Malcolm McLaren opened a boutique.



Role models: Eva and Charlene sampling Vivienne Westwood outfits at Liberty's in central London

Water experts demand a ban on new homes

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

WATER resources are so stretched that no more houses should be built in part of the South and East of Britain, experts in the industry said yesterday.

Ray Tennant, chairman of the Water Companies Association, insisted the projected need for 4.4 million new households by 2016 could prove a disaster in areas such as Hampshire, east and west Sussex, Kent and East Anglia.

"Certainly in areas like East and West Sussex we will find it difficult to supply new townships. There are no major rivers and most water comes from boreholes in the South Downs which are being fully exploited," he said. The Association will be objecting to future schemes and were already holding urgent talks with county planning chiefs across southern England.

Mr Tennant, who is a director of Mid Southern and South East Water, said projects were already in the pipeline which were causing alarm. "There are proposals for a township of 10,000 properties between Lewis and Eastbourne. In north Hampshire there are plans for a new town," he said.

"Every new home needs one, two, maybe three toilets, a

new garden and a new car that needs washing."

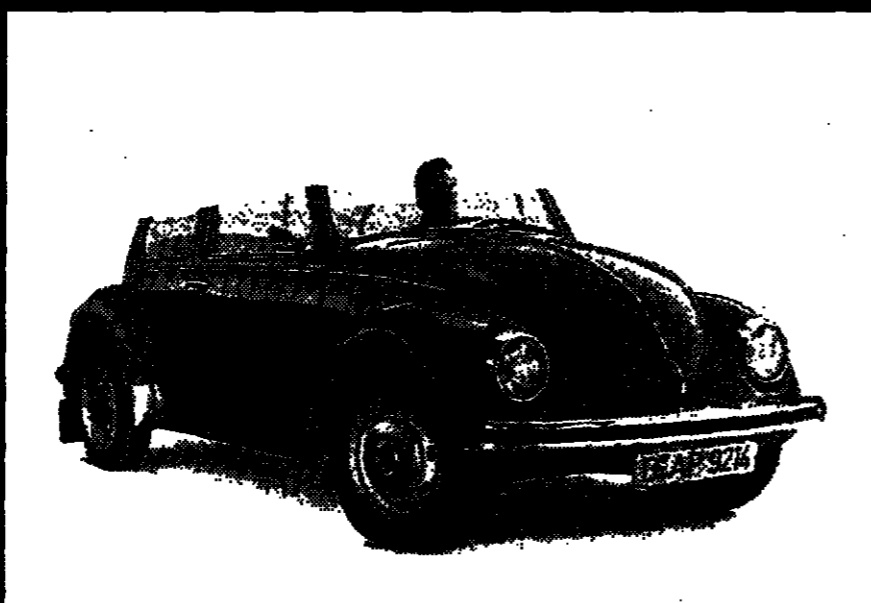
The fears over the Government's new household projections come in advance of a meeting on Monday, organised by the WCA, which represents the smaller water supply firms. The meeting is aimed at solving Britain's water problems into the next century.

"We cannot run businesses the way we are at the moment, constantly on the edge of a crisis," said Mr Tennant. The meeting has secured the backing of the Environment Agency, environmental groups who fear Britain's wetlands and rivers are being run dry by a combination of heavy abstraction and surging demand, and all 27 of the water companies in England and Wales.

It follows several dry years and forecasts that global warming will make water even more scarce.

Mike Walker, the WCA's head of policy, said that the time had come to draft a national strategy which balanced the interests of consumers, government, green groups and water companies. The WCA also wants a study into the need for new reservoirs and underground storage systems.

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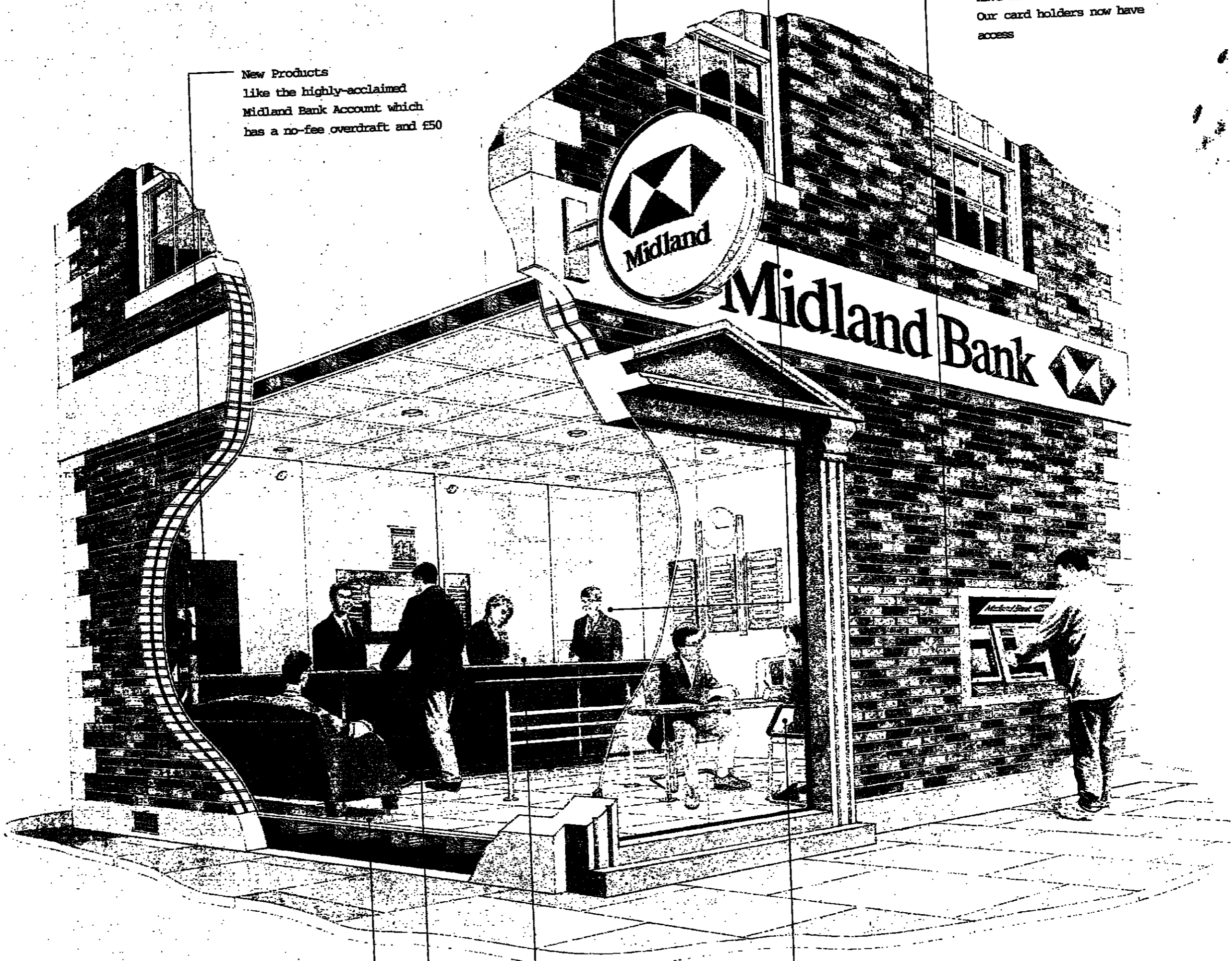
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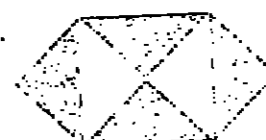
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مركزاً من لامل

Man wrongly jailed for Birmingham pub bombing warns of the 'terrible trauma of normal life'

Now released men face the ordeal of freedom

By CAROL MIDDLEY
AND STEPHEN FARRELL

THE Bridgewater Three may feel jubilation now but the problems of freedom are only just beginning, members of the Birmingham Six and Guildford Four said yesterday.

Paddy Hill, 53, who served 17 years in prison after being wrongly convicted for the IRA Birmingham pub bombings, said not a week went by when he did not crave to be back behind bars.

The Irishman, who attended the Court of Appeal to support Vincent and Michael Hickey and Jim Robinson, said prisoners were not properly prepared to re-enter "normal" life and suffered "terrible trauma" on the outside. They often longed for the relative security of institutions where they did not have to make decisions for themselves.

"You feel you don't belong. You are a fish out of water," said Mr Hill. "These lads will find that one minute they are on cloud nine and the next



Paddy Hill, one of the Birmingham Six, yesterday

they are sitting on the floor crying like babies — and they won't know why the hell they are doing it.

"You are just a shell. You try to get a job and people ask you whether you have been trained on IBM computers. I have to say I don't even know how to work a bloody television set. There is not a week goes by when I don't wish I was back in prison. You get no help, no counselling, nothing."

Gerard Conlon, who served

14 years after being wrongly convicted for two 1974 pub bombings in which seven people died, said released prisoners felt like orphans.

"The people that Vincent, Michael and James are coming out to have no idea of the allowances they will have to make. There is no basic love or compassion shown in prison," he said.

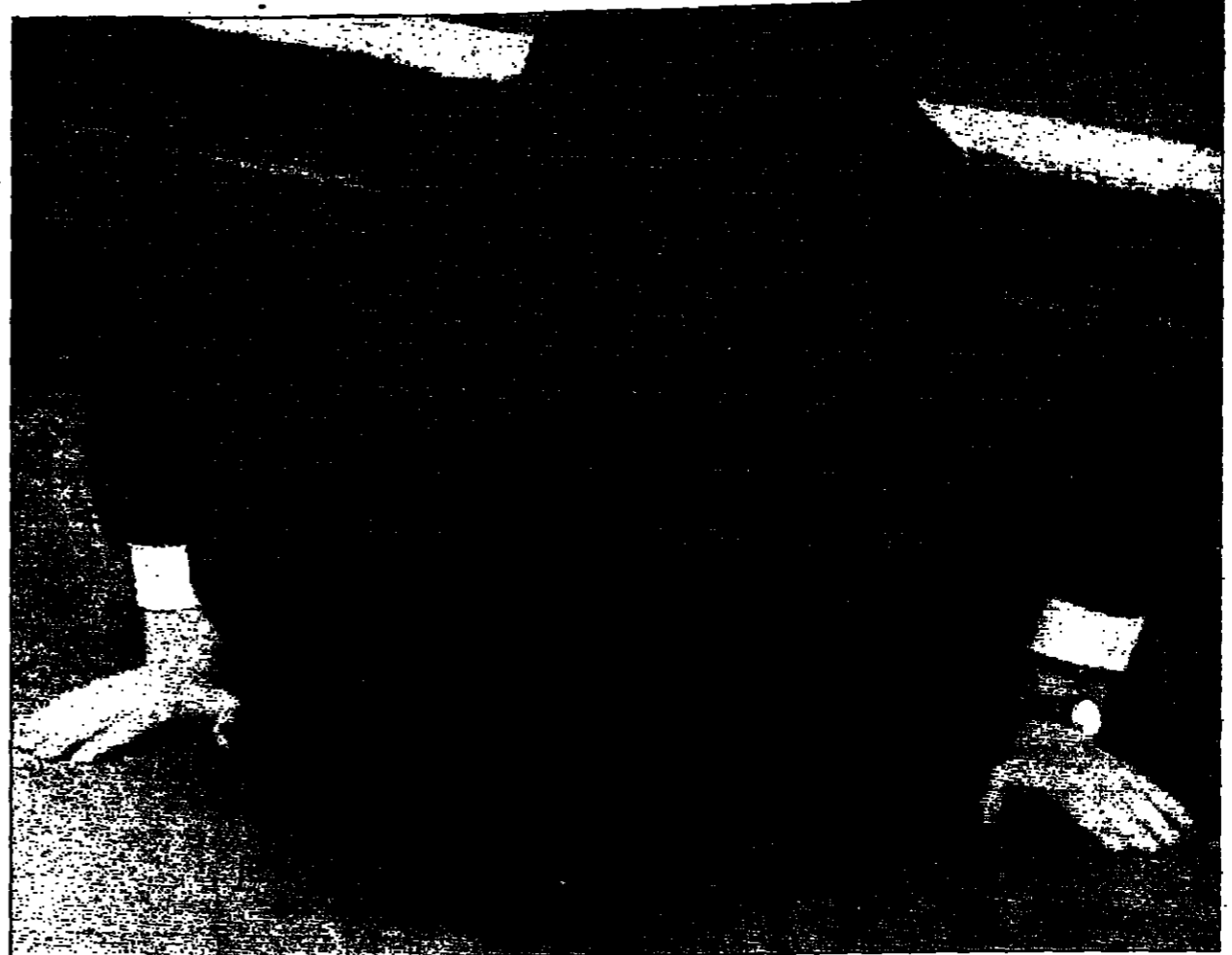
Among the 200 people in court were Sara Thornton, convicted of murdering her

violent husband Malcolm but later freed after a retrial found her guilty of manslaughter. Jill Morrell, who campaigned for the release of the hostage John McCarthy, and George Slocott, brother of Winston Slocott, were also there. Showbusiness supporters included the actress Frances de la Tour and Roger Lloyd Pack, star of *Only Fools and Horses*.

Michael Hickey's stepfather, a long-time campaigner for the release of the three, was himself behind bars yesterday as they walked free.

Frederick Whelan, 65, was jailed last month for a year by Leicester Crown Court for attempting to smuggle £140 worth of cannabis resin into Gartree Prison, after his stepson had asked for a "smoke" to relieve his boredom. He had no previous convictions.

Michael Hickey called yesterday for his stepfather to be released. "I smoke cannabis. I learnt it in prison. I needed some drugs to stay alive and my stepfather was trying to help me," he said.



Michael Hickey kisses the ground as he leaves the Law Courts after spending more than 18 years in jail

Boy's family may never be freed from pain of grief

By RICHARD DUCE

THE parents of Carl Bridgewater deal daily with an "open wound" of grief which after 19 years has not been allowed to heal, a local churchman said yesterday.

Brian and Janet Bridgewater made no comment about events in the Court of Appeal. But Canon Paul Tongue spoke for them in the small West Midlands town of Wordsley, where he said: "There is total bewilderment and perplexity at the speed everything has happened in the last 24 hours."

"There is a wound that grief leaves, particularly when a child dies, left alone when he is murdered. That wound has to be given time and peace in which to heal and the Bridgewaters have not had that," Canon Tongue said. "This may be the end for the Hickeys and Mr Robinson but it is not for the Bridgewaters."

In a rare interview last year, Mr Bridgewater said: "Just occasionally you can't help but wonder what the boy would be doing now. You can never get over something like this and you can't describe what it does to you. We were convinced at the time that those men did it. Nothing

since has changed our minds." Canon Tongue said yesterday: "There will be disagreement about the guilt or innocence of these three men but the one thing about which there will be no argument is the terrible situation that still remains for the parents of Carl Bridgewater. The sad reality is their wound could be left open for the rest of their lives if there is no positive resolution."

Mr Bridgewater, an engineer, and his wife still live in the neat terraced house from which Carl set out on his newspaper round in 1978. Their other children, Philip and Jane, have moved away. The family home is a mile from Yew Tree Farm where Carl was killed. The farm is derelict after being bought by the council to make way for a relief road.

Mr and Mrs Bridgewater left their home in the early hours yesterday to stay with friends. Joe Goodacre, a neighbour, whose son Ian used to play with Carl, said: "It is always displayed in banner headlines as 'the Bridgewater case', which brings it back for them each time. If the police tell you who killed your child then you've got to believe them."

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Former policeman who interviewed Pat Molloy is now a director in a Midlands security firm

Ex-detective stays silent over forgery accusation

BY RICHARD DUCE AND RUSSELL JENKINS

THE surviving detective constable accused of faking Vincent Hickey's confession was refusing to make a statement of his own yesterday, as allegations of police involvement in the miscarriage of justice provoked an outcry.

Graham Leake, 60, stayed behind an anonymous wooden door at his security company, Heritage Security Services, in Sedgley, West Midlands. A woman employee said over the intercom: "He has got nothing to say."

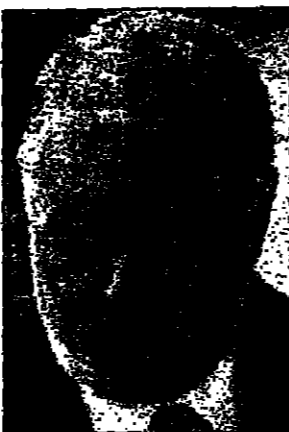
Since the interview with Pat Molloy almost 19 years ago, Mr Leake has become a director in the security guard firm, and now lives in a £200,000 executive home in Perton, overlooking countryside near Wolverhampton.

His partner in the West Midlands force, DC John Perkins, died from cancer in 1993, aged 46, a disgraced and disgraced man. His wife June always complained that pressure brought to bear by the

Bridgewater campaigners contributed to his early death.

Mr Perkins had a hand in a significant proportion of the cases conducted by the West Midlands serious crimes squad that West Yorkshire Police were called in to review, and was once fined for falsifying evidence. The squad was disbanded after allegations that officers fabricated confessions and planted evidence in 23 cases during the 1980s. Members of the squad had also been involved in the convictions of the six men falsely imprisoned for 17 years for the Birmingham pub bombings.

When the Bridgewater Four lost their first appeal in 1989, Staffordshire Police — responsible for the murder investigation — halted the exposure of the "issue of lies and half truths" put forward to discredit their evidence. Yesterday the Staffordshire and West Midlands forces said they were waiting for the full



Leake: he had nothing to say

and that they would receive the full support and co-operation of the force.

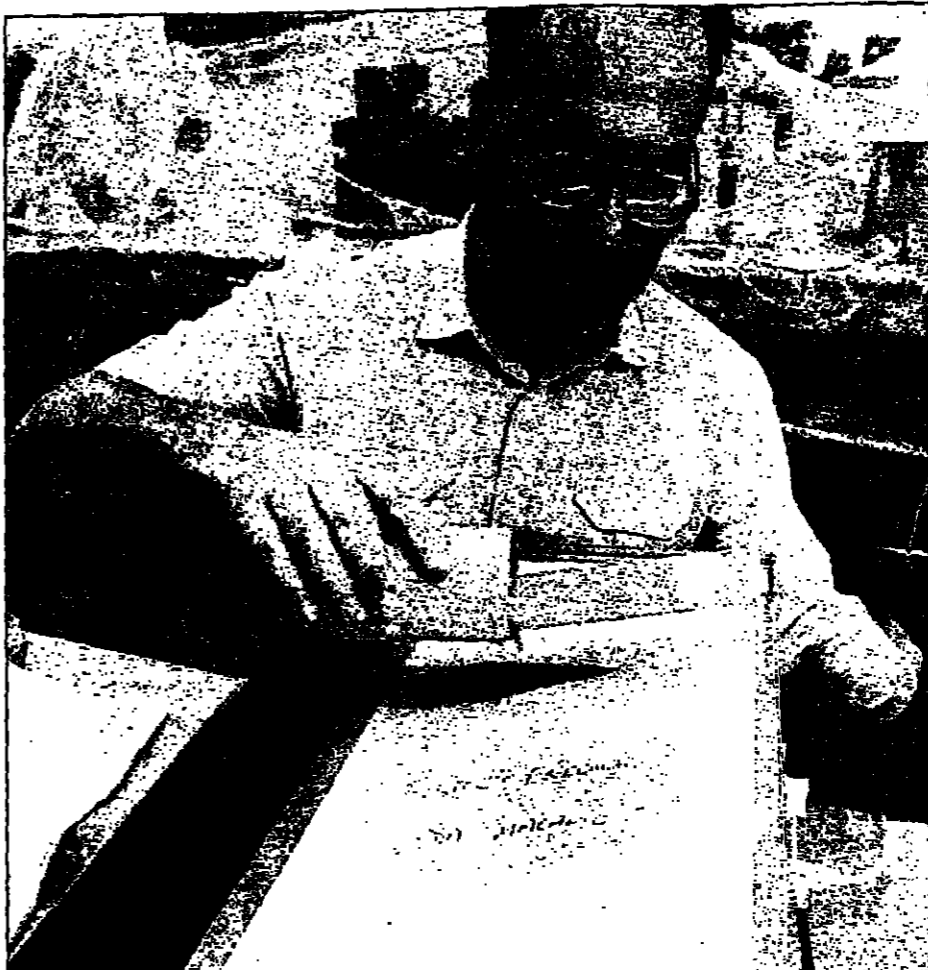
In the Court of Appeal, Michael Mansfield, QC, speaking for the defendants, said that a forged confession purporting to have been signed by Vincent Hickey was almost certainly written by Mr Leake, and that Mr Perkins forged the signature.

Mr Molloy, who died in prison in 1981, always maintained that he had been shown just such a confession by police, but was not believed. Neither Mr Perkins nor Mr Leake had anything to do with interviewing Hickey, who was being dealt with separately at another police station.

Last year, Mr Leake said: "If the judges [in the appeal] ask me, I certainly have things to say and, believe me, I will tell them about what some of us think."

Last night he arrived back at his home with his wife Anne, and again refused to comment on the court proceedings.

appeal evidence to emerge before commenting officially. John Giffard, Staffordshire Chief Constable, said: "This case has still to be heard by the Court of Appeal and, at this stage, no further comment can be made." A spokesman for the West Midlands said that the Merseyside Police inquiry into this case is continuing.



A manufacturer's representative demonstrating the Esda machine in action

Evidence

Continued from page 1
imprint was discovered only two weeks ago when Jim Nichol, the convicted men's solicitor, was reviewing the evidence while preparing for the appeal due to start in April. And when Mr Nichol had the handwriting on the Hickey "statement" examined, his suspicions appeared to have been borne out.

Molloy's interview was carried out by Detective Constable Graham Leake and Detective Constable John Perkins with Detective Sergeant John Robbins sitting outside.

"The impressions in the body of the caption are in handwriting that certainly looks very similar to DC Leake and the impressions in the signature of Vincent Hickey — which is certainly not a genuine Vincent Hickey signature — are very like the handwriting of DC Perkins", Mr Roberts told the court yesterday.

The Crown accepted that there was "no other sensible explanation that we can properly put forward" other than that the Hickey confession was a forgery.

Constable Perkins, who has since died, was disgraced in 1989 after he was caught falsifying a statement.

Lawyer who never doubted the four were innocent

BY RICHARD FORD

FOR Jim Nichol, the former pit worker, printer and now solicitor to the Bridgewater Four, yesterday's decision is a vindication of 14 years of largely unpaid work.

He is one of a handful of solicitors whose belief in their clients' innocence has made them dogged campaigners for justice. He also helped to clear Eddie Browning of the murder of Marie Wilkes, and Colin Wallace, the former army information officer, of manslaughter. He has been pursuing the Bridgewater case since 1983, when he was first put in touch with Ann Whelan, mother of Michael Hickey, by the journalist Paul Foot. Mr

Nichol, 51, said: "I looked at the case and just believed they were innocent. That is why I do it."

He has worked unpaid on the case, overcoming setbacks such as the announcement by the then Home Secretary, Kenneth Clarke, in 1993 that he would not refer the case to the Court of Appeal.

Mr Nichol was destined to follow his father at North Wallbottle colliery on the edge of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. His parents died when he was a boy and he was brought up by an aunt and uncle in Lenington near Newcastle and left school at 15. Having contracted tuberculosis, he could not go underground, as his father had done, and worked above ground at the pit.

He became a printer and became a solicitor only at the age of 36, after studying law at night school. He would still like to go to university.

At his practice in Finsbury Park, north London, his partner is Carolyn Taylor, niece of the former Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor of Gossforth. Ms Taylor said: "Jim is driven. He takes the work home."

Mr Nichol, whose daughter was in court to witness yesterday's triumph, said that "gut instinct" had made him look again at the confession that had proved conclusive to undermining the Crown's case.



Nichol: studied law at night school

THE TIMES DILLONS CRIME FORUM



Learn the art of
CRIME WRITING
with Minette Walters
and Colin Dexter

TWO of Britain's leading crime novelists, Minette Walters (above) and Colin Dexter, will discuss the art of crime writing at a Times/Dillons Crime Forum on Tuesday, March 4, at the Institute of Education, London WC1. The audience will also have a chance to question the authors.

Dexter's books are worldwide bestsellers and his Inspector Morse television series topped the ratings with 18 million viewers. Minette Walters has also had television success with *The Sculptress*, which will be followed in May by *The Ice House*.

The admission price includes £2 off the price of Walters's new novel *The Echo* (£16.99) and £1 off Dexter's *Death is Now My Neighbour* (£9.99), both published by Macmillan. For full details of how to book, see coupon (below).

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مركزاً من لامل

Cleveland's shock tactics to curb youth crime may be adopted by other police forces

Glimpse of prison hell cuts teenage reoffending by half

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE reality of prison life is being brought home to young offenders on Teesside. They are shown the shocking-out buckers, the stained prison-issue underwear and the metal food trays on which custard flows into gravy as the inmate carries his meal back to his cell, perhaps up three flights of stairs.

Sexual abuse and constant obscenity are also discussed as is the prevalence of bullying and assault.

The Cleveland police project that uses shock tactics to stop young people reoffending is being studied by the Home Office and other forces. Graphic descriptions of the dehumanising and degrading experience of doing time has cut the level of repeat offending by teenagers in Stockton by more than half.

Just as the 17th-century astronomer Galileo recanted and withdrew his beliefs that the Earth was not the centre of the Universe when shown the torture instruments of the Inquisition, the teenagers are taking the warnings about prison to heart.

Inspector David Walker,

Stockton's community liaison officer, said: "At the end of one session one boy's mother was nearly sick at what she had been shown. Another woman was sobbing and her son was comforting her in his arms. He promised her he would never do anything to get himself locked away. It has been a tremendous success."

The Stockton scheme relies on two prison officers, Andy Mitchell and Bob Puckie, from the nearby Holme House jail, giving their time voluntarily. The Prison Service is considering a request from the Inspector of Constabulary to dedicate staff full-time to run similar projects elsewhere.

The scheme — "Prison, Me? No Way" — was tested for three months last year and has now been adopted as permanent policy by Cleveland police. During the trial period 31 young offenders attended Sunday morning sessions at Stockton police station. Of those attending only five have reoffended, against the normal reoffending rate of 37 per cent.

The scheme is aimed at 12 to 17-year-olds who have already

received one caution for an offence. Those caught a second time are given the option of facing the courts or attending the "wars-and-all" course.

They and their families watch a 45-minute video shot inside Hull prison that follows an offender as he enters the system. It begins with him being stripped and examined and given regulation prison clothes. The daily routine inside is then shown with a full stereo system amplifying the sounds of incarceration.

Afterwards the two prison officers talk frankly about prison life, including graphic details of the drugs, the gangs and even the sexual assaults.

Mr Walker said: "The officers tell them not to believe anything their mates have told them about it being a cushy life. In Holme House there are two pool tables for 750 people. Only the bullies get to play on those. The TV goes on from 5.30 to 7.30 and only the bullies get to watch it."

Inspector Ian Birch, the head of Stockton district, said: "Any youngsters tempted to re-offend are soon put off when they have seen the video

and have got a taste of life behind bars. Another bonus is that other members of the family of young offenders, including brothers, sisters and friends, also attend the scheme on a voluntary basis. It means peer pressure to commit crime may be reduced as more

people than anticipated know the consequences of committing crime.

"Youngsters are told straight away that after a second caution they have no more chances and that they will be dealt with by the courts. But we find we are

getting the message home and the scheme is working."

The programme costs about £160 a person per year, compared to the £1,500 a week it costs to keep an offender in prison.

Prison Officer Mitchell said: "Some people think prison is

watching TV all day long but that's not the case. Youngsters are shown the indignity of life in prison and what it is like to eat and sleep in a cell where you also have a toilet. Offenders are shocked by what they see and results show the project is working."



Hard-hitting: Prison Officer Andy Mitchell underlines the realities of prison to young first offenders in Stockton

Eurotunnel in freight safety talks

Eurotunnel has begun talks with safety officials about restarting freight shuttle services. But the company refused to comment on a French press report that it had decided against safer but more expensive shuttle wagons. The safety of the open wagons was questioned after drivers were hurt in a fire on a freight shuttle last November. Eurotunnel said that it had submitted only draft proposals to the Channel Tunnel Safety Authority.

Fan assaulted

James "Five Bellies" Gardner, a friend of the Glasgow Rangers player Paul Gascoigne, was fined £500 at Paisley Sheriff Court for assaulting a Celtic fan in a pub. The Rangers player Charlie Miller and Steven McDermott were cleared of charges arising from the incident.

Freedom plea

Alexander Hall, 42, a former Strathclyde policeman jailed for life in 1988 for slitting the throat of a teenage girl, will ask for temporary freedom next month pending appeal. Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, has agreed to have the case re-examined in the light of new evidence.

Yoghurt recall

Safeway has recalled 150g pots of its own-brand toffee and hazelnut yoghurts because the contents may have been mistakenly switched. Tesco is also recalling jars of its Chocolate Swirl and 325g and 200g jars of Chocolate Spread because they may contain traces of nut.

Blackmail case

A man who threatened to cut the throat of a Trafalgar Square ice cream vendor unless he paid £7,000 protection money was jailed for 33 months. Bob Darke, 37, of Kennington, south London, pleaded guilty to blackmail. His partner was earlier jailed for four years.

Baby snatcher

Sarah Allen, 24, of Maybush, Southampton, admitted four charges of trying to abduct babies and asked for nine other cases to be considered at Winchester Crown Court. She was placed on probation providing she undergoes psychiatric treatment.

Road 'shooting'

A "stressed" driver who fired an imitation gun at another motorist was jailed for four months. Paul Marchant, 27, of Whiteley Wood, Reading, fired a blank from his car as the other man ran up to him after problems in overtaking.

Catholic pupils ran drugs ring

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

PARENTS at a Roman Catholic independent school were advised yesterday to "keep their wits about them" after the headmaster broke up a drugs ring involving 20 pupils.

Two fifth-form boys were expelled and 18 suspended over their involvement in supplying and using cannabis at St Bede's College in Manchester. The school joins a long list of leading schools that have disciplined students for drug-taking in the past year. They include Eton and Wellington College in Berkshire, and the King's School at Rochester, Kent.

Drugs have become so commonplace in schools that the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference of leading independent schools has suggested that pupils caught using cannabis should be given a second chance. Exeter University researchers said last year that a survey of 50,000 teenagers found that a third of boys and more than a quarter of girls aged 15 and 16 claimed to have tried cannabis. John

Byrne, headmaster of St Bede's, has called in counsellors from Lifeline, an agency that deals with heroin-addicts, to lecture the college's 1,020 pupils. In a letter to parents, Mr Byrne says: "The governors and the staff are at one in deploring the drugs culture which bedevils Greater Manchester. We treat with contempt the notion of the so-called soft drug."

He added: "I must respectfully ask parents to keep their wits about them with regard to their children's behaviour and social habits. You are only too aware that many of the pubs and clubs are the refuges of the drugs pushers. But equally worrying is the prevalence of drugs at parties where peer pressure and fear of ostracism may induce the naive teenager to experiment."

Every pupil will be warned of the dangers of drugs when they return to college — motto *Nunquam Otio Torpet* (Never Allow Yourself To Be Lazy) — on Monday after the half-term break.

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Radar: top secret in 1939

Historic radar site is listed

A 350ft steel tower which formed part of Britain's first radar air-defence system has been given listed building status.

RAF Stenigot, on the Lincolnshire Wolds, is regarded as the best remaining example of the 20 radar sites constructed along the east coast in 1939. The Chain Home system, as it was known, played a vital role in the Battle of Britain and other RAF operations during the Second World War.

Stenigot, between Louth and Horncastle, was chosen because it occupies the highest point along the east coast between Yorkshire and Kent. Stenigot was also used as a Gee Station, with secret electronic technology which directed British bomber crews to enemy targets with pinpoint accuracy. Now its galvanised steel transmitter tower and two buildings have been Grade II listed.

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THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22 1997

New hand finds Blue Peter still on course after 39 years

By Joe Joseph

IF THE names Christopher Trace, Valerie Singleton, John Noakes and Peter Purves mean anything to you, then you probably won't care much that Richard Bacon, a former local radio reporter, was yesterday named the 24th presenter of *Blue Peter*.

Bacon replaces the resident hunk, Tim Vincent, on what remains the BBC's flagship children's programme after nearly 40 years, when most people might have assumed that there just wasn't any crepe paper left to glue, any tall building that hadn't been abseiled, or any animal that hadn't been allowed to poop on the studio floor.

Christopher Trace and Lella Williams were the first presenters in 1958. Although the show has changed over the years, the spirit of *Blue Peter* — a programme which has given "sticky-back plastic" and "Get down She!" an almost Proustian undertow for generations of children — has stayed the same.

Bacon's audition involved making a Christmas card, bouncing on a trampoline and handling a snake — tricks



Model presenters: Christopher Trace, Valerie Singleton and, right, John Noakes in 1966

you would be asked to perform at a job interview only for *Blue Peter* or for one of the more progressive merchant banks.

Bacon, 21, has already been given his first television assignment: a trip to the jungle of Brunei for military training. Climbing remote mountains and building Thunderbirds Tracy Island out of old toilet rolls and egg boxes is apparently what Bacon had been wishing to do all his short life, with pretty much the same passion that Tony Blair

has been wishing to be Prime Minister.

"I remember seeing Caron Keating filming *Blue Peter* when I was with my family," Bacon said. "I was about ten."

But I had dreams that it would be me one day. I couldn't believe it when I heard I had got the job. I've had to keep it a secret for over a week. When I rang my mum she jumped up and down screaming with excitement."

Oliver Macfarlane, the editor of *Blue Peter*, said: "We looked far and wide for our

new presenter. Richard is hugely likeable and that immediately came across in the audition. He's a good presenter and should be able to cope with most things that *Blue Peter* throws at him."

Bacon, born in Mansfield, began his career as a reporter at BBC Radio Nottingham before moving to the cable channel Live TV. At *Blue Peter* he will join on the sofa Stuart Miles, Katy Hill and Romana D'Annunzio — names currently recognisable only to those still in short trousers or Spice Girls T-shirts, but probably not for long.

Although the show's early presenters hung around pasting crepe paper onto empty washing-up liquid bottles for long enough to make their woolly jumpers look lived-in, the current crop often stays only as long as it takes to get a sexier offer from elsewhere.

Most famously, Anthea Turner went onwards and upwards — if not always happily, as her high profile and even higher salary attracted a certain amount of ridicule, not least from some of her subsequent co-presenters, such as Eamonn Holmes. Actor-cum-presenter Tim Vincent, whom Bacon is replacing, has appeared in *The Clothes Show* and the drama series *Dangerfield*. He has also been a model.



Richard Bacon meeting his new colleagues, from left: Romana D'Annunzio, Stuart Miles and Katy Hill

Blue Peter has lived on long after most of the competition.

Thames launched *Maggie* in 1968 with Tony Eastable, Peter Brady and Susan Stranks, who gave the programme a sexier accent than had been the norm on children's television. But they were pitted, in that year, against the *Blue Peter* dream team of Singleton, Noakes, Purves and Petra the dog.

Also, in Noakes, *Blue Peter* had an amiable maniac who was willing to undertake any assignment — however hazardous or barmy — as long as he could be accompanied by a camera and his dog, Shep.

Top 40 is being manipulated, says Radio 1

By Damian Whitworth

RECORD companies are giving away so many free and discounted singles to boost their success in the Top 40 that even the BBC says the chart has lost its credibility.

An exposé of the practice is to be broadcast on Radio 1 tomorrow night, after the chart programme. The Top 40 is compiled from figures for the number of records sold each week while other charts are based on the amount of airtime each single receives. Investigators for the programme, *Hyping the Hits*, found that shops were being given free records so that they could sell them at discounts and push them into the number one slot. The records were then sold at normal price.

A number-one hit guarantees publicity for a group that will assist in much more lucrative album sales.

Shops were asked how it was possible to sell CD singles for just 99p when the normal price was around £3. It emerged that record companies were offering them up to three free singles for every one the shop bought and two shops were even given completely free stock.

In November last year Mark Owen, the former Take That singer, saw his single

shoot straight to number 2. One shop was offered one free record for every one it bought. But when these failed to sell, the whole stock was given free.

John Preston, of the British Phonographic Institute and BMG Records (UK), to which Owen is signed, said: "Some of those records may have been given away but not in the kind of quantities that our competitors have." He said that 300,000 to 400,000 copies of that record had been sold. "I don't expect our discounts were more than about 15 or 20 per cent but I honestly don't know. That kind of discount is considered normal. A game of chicken is going on. Are we first to decide we are not doing what our competitors are doing?"

Last night Trevor Dann, head of BBC Music Entertainment, said: "The only way you can tell how popular a record is is how slowly it goes down the chart," he said.

He said listeners had a right to know what was happening. "The public may not be aware of how the chart is manipulated. We have an obligation to let them know."

The BBC is reviewing, with the record industry, the way the chart is compiled.

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Chief Rabbi places morality firmly on the political agenda



BY RUTH GLEDHILL AND DANIEL JOHNSON

THE Chief Rabbi, Dr Jonathan Sacks, today calls on the political parties to restore the Judeo-Christian tradition to the centre of British national life. With his book, *The Politics of Hope*, Dr Sacks attempts to place morality on the agenda of political debate and advocates a liberal society rooted in communal and family values.

Dr Sacks argues that the views he holds are also being adopted "by politicians at both ends of the political spectrum" — by Democrats

and Republicans in America, and members of the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties in Britain — but his scathing attack on contemporary Britain will be particularly welcome to the Labour leader, Tony Blair. He shares the Chief Rabbi's interest in the American communitarian movement and his rejection both of "the politics of collectivism and the politics of private initiative".

His critique of Thatcherism and the right-wing libertarianism of the

1980s is in marked contrast to the philosophy of his predecessor, Lord Jakobovits, who was close to Margaret Thatcher and espoused many of her political views. But Dr Sacks is also scathing in his treatment of the permissive society of the 1960s and the libertarians of the left.

The timing, so near to an election, of the first purely political work by a Chief Rabbi, and the first by the head of any British religious denomination for more than 50 years, will be seen as provocative by Dr Sacks's critics among orthodox Jews.

In his book, serialised in *The Times* from today, Dr Sacks mounts a critique of Margaret Thatcher's oft-quoted statement: "There is no such thing as society." Dr Sacks comments: "This is a tenable view and there is only one thing to be said against it. It has been tried and it has failed."

He adds: "It has given rise to a social order — or more precisely, to a social disorder — more bleak than any within living memory. Today many parts of Britain and America are marked by vandalism, violent crime and a loss of civility; by the breakdown of the family and the

widespread neglect of children; by an erosion of trust and a general loss of faith in the power of governments to cure some of our most deep-seated problems."

Dr Sacks says higher-income groups benefited disproportionately from the tax-cutting programmes of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, but argues that the real inequality of post-industrial capitalism goes far deeper. He says the "new rich" no longer mix with the poor as, for example, lords mixed with serfs in earlier ages. "Social geography is gradual-

ly polarising between the urban ghetto and the gilded ghetto," he argues.

Dr Sacks says he is not arguing for a return to Victorian values. "There is nothing to be said for marching boldly towards the past," he says. "What the Victorians taught us is that whatever we seek collectively to create, the way to do so is to focus on character and on the institutions that promote a strong sense of personhood and social concern."

Dr Jonathan Sacks, page 22
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Archbishop of York opposes US-style tele-evangelism

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE Archbishop of York, Dr David Hope, said yesterday he would strongly oppose the establishment of fundamentalist American-style television stations in Britain.

Dr Hope had helped to promote the London Christian Radio Station, but said that it was "ecumenically broad-based", different in tone and content from those he was criticising. He particularly criticised Mother Angelina, the Roman Catholic broadcaster who has a huge following for her radio station in America with her denunciations of the world and the flesh. He did not want to see such tele-

evangelist stations in this country and argued that the Church should rather seek to convey its message through the mainstream media.

Typical of the kind of American tele-evangelist who would be opposed by the Archbishop was Jim Bakker, who, with his wife, found wealth and fame in the 1980s with their upbeat message. In his autobiography, Mr Bakker charts his downfall after the press learnt of his adultery. Jimmy Swaggart, another American tele-evangelist, resigned after admitting that he had slept with a prostitute.

Radio and television could help to pose the right questions, he said, arguing for the preservation of straightfor-

ward "religious" programmes such as BBC Radio 3's *Choral Evensong* and BBC's *Songs of Praise*. "These are still remarkably valid, and faith-creating and faith-provoking. They still command considerable audience figures."

There was a "spiritual hunger" that the Church had to learn to address through the media. "Everywhere I go I hear a similar story: that people want to believe in God, in Heaven; in something other than the rather shallow and predictable existence which can so easily become the norm, and that more than 70 per cent of the population say they believe in God."

This presented a challenge



The American tele-evangelists Jim Bakker, with his wife Tammy, and Jimmy Swaggart, with his wife Frances. Both men faced scandal

for the Church, operating as it did in a culture where the answers to life's questions had to be presented in a few sentences. Dr Hope, addressing journalists, clergy and students, at Newcastle University, said it was essential that bishops and other church leaders "seize the agenda".

"I acknowledge the need for us within the Church of England to be media-aware — less naive, more ready to understand the complexities of a media-saturated world." The mobile phone-carrying Archbishop has two of the most astute religious public relations officials in the Church of

England — Raymond Barker and the Rev Rob Marshall.

Dr Hope admitted that he was not a regular listener to BBC Radio 4's *Thought for the Day* or *Prayer for the Day*, but said that his local radio station in York had a three-hour Sunday morning programme which was "stimulating, varied and lively".

The numbers listening to religious programmes on a Sunday, such as the one in York and BBC Radio 4's *Sunday* were remarkable, he said.

Dr Hope said: "There are those who conclude the whole [media] show to be so corrupting that the Christian and the

faith community should shun them entirely. Indeed, I know those whose basic policy is to say nothing; 'not available', 'no comment'. This, in my view, is unrealistic."

At Your Service, Weekend, page 15

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THIS weekend many Christian communities are entering the second week of Lent. For 40 days, as followers of Christ, we recall and re-enact the time He spent in prayer and fasting in the desert. For Jesus, this was a Spirit-led preparation for his public ministry, death and Resurrection. For us, it is a time of preparation for celebration of that death and Resurrection in our Easter festivities.

The language associated with Lent tells its own story. The name comes from the Anglo-Saxon word denoting the lengthening of the days as spring gains a hold. On the eve of Lent comes the carnival of Mardi Gras. "Carnival" comes from "carné" and "vale", farewell to meat. Mardi Gras means Fat Tuesday, when milk and butter have to be finished prior to the austere diet of a traditional Lent. Exercises of self-denial, such as fasting, are easily misunderstood. They can seem an unhealthy attempt to expurgate a sense of guilt or

opposite of compulsive consumerism. To do with less frees one from the siren call of constant shopping. Prayer puts into practice the truth that in God alone is to be found the source of lasting satisfaction, and without God's blessing all will crumble to dust. Almsgiving or practical charity reminds us that all we have is given to us on trust by God for the common good, not just for ourselves.

Lent, like spring, is a time of new life. It is a clearing out of the dross, a refining of the spirit, a breaking of idols and false gods. Without it our lives become cluttered and confused. With a renewed sense of God, we find again a focus of judgment, of knowing the true from the false. Dilemmas remain in abundance, but our homing sense has been restored.

□ The Right Rev Vincent Nichols is the Roman Catholic Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster

Vincent Nichols

even to appease a threatening deity. More probably they can be passed off as an attempt at healthier living. But, which refined by Christian faith they are understood and experienced as an attempt to free one's inmost spirit to be more responsive to the things of God.

The observance of Lent is not a "do this or else" exercise. It is an invitation to enter more deeply into the reality of God's presence and the exquisite joy of knowing God more clearly.

Traditionally the practice of Lent calls for three kinds of effort: self-denial, prayer and practical charity towards those in need. Each aspect addresses our tendency to lose sight of God. Self-denial is the

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Artist returns to oils to capture light and colour

Traditional skills flower at Hockney's new show

BY DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

THE spectacular latest paintings by David Hockney, Britain's most celebrated living artist, will go on sale in May in his largest commercial show in London. Shown here in a special preview, the images of irises, sunflowers and violas, drenched in a radiant Californian light, use mesmerising colours that stay with the viewer long after they are seen.

In the new paintings, Hockney has forsaken faxes, photocopies and other technology that has inspired experimentation, to return to the original tools of his trade: oils and canvas.

Hockney, who lives in California, spoke yesterday of the influence of a revelatory exhibition last year on Vermeer, the 17th-century Dutch master of light. "What struck me was how vivid and strong the colour was in paintings which are 300 years old. It was partly the way he'd painted them," he said.

"I came back here and realised we've got a marvelous abundance of wonderful, strong light. I began to arrange daylighting in different ways. The most important thing was the way colour was put on so as to stay there."

"I put on thin layers, so that it is transparent. Vermeer's technique was thin layers — thin layers of ultramarine, for



Hockney by Hockney: a charcoal sketch from 1983 shows the way he constantly explores new styles

example, to make it blue. It's because of the colour that it's lasted 300 years. I've painted flowers throughout my career, but I've never really done a whole series."

Such is Hockney's draw for collectors, he commands prices fetched by Old Masters. The latest pictures, to be exhibited at Annely Juda Fine Art in central London from May 1, range in price from £150,000 to £400,000.

David Juda, co-director of the gallery where the works will be shown, said: "These are the best paintings he's done in the past 15 years. They're so immediate. It's the

colour. If you look at the paintings, they look so incredibly thickly painted. But come up close and you can nearly see the canvas through the paint."

Hockney, born in 1937, began the series with sunflowers when his close friend, Jonathan Silver, a businessman and collector from Hockney's home-town of Bradford, sent him 59 sunflowers for his 59th birthday. "I painted 30 of them. You don't get too long to paint them. They only lasted six days. That's what I took to paint them. After then, they bend and fall. I wanted to

paint pictures with a lot of yellow — the colour of hope, according to Van Gogh, and a rare colour in painting at the moment."

Hockney, who has criticised art schools that do not teach the basic crafts of painting and drawing, learnt the rules at Bradford College of Art and the Royal School of Art before breaking them.

He is best known for such images as *A Bigger Splash* (1967), the brilliant blue swimming pool painting depicting a splash just made by an unseen, submerged diver, his 1969 portrait of the fashion designer Ossie Clark in *Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy* — both owned by the Tate Gallery — and the suite of charming etchings *Six Fairy Tales From the Brothers Grimm*, also from 1969.

Hockney's show, which opens on May 1, will include a series of portraits among the 48 paintings. He remains faithful to his sisters and they will reappear in the latest images, his 96-year-old mother is among them.

The artist will fly to London to direct the hanging; an exhibition's installation is of paramount importance to him. Inspired by his work in stage design, he has constructed a complete scale model of the Annely Juda gallery at his Los Angeles studio and had every picture reduced to postage-stamp size.



Hockney's latest oil on canvas works can command Old Master prices

Robber is jailed for snatching Rolex

A ROBBER who wrested a Rolex watch from a couple whose Range Rover was held up in traffic was jailed for ten years yesterday. Judge Elfer, QC, said that Tarek Alayli carried out a "thoughtless and terrifying" attack on victims whose only crime "was that by working hard at their chosen professions, they carried their riches of Rolex on their left wrists".

Alayli, 21, of Fulham, southwest London, admitted at Southwark Crown Court robbing Victor Monsey, 53, a company director, of his £16,000 Rolex and trying to rob his wife Elizabeth, 36, a cable television executive, of her £12,000 watch.

The couple, from Barnes, southwest London, fell prey last August to a gang armed with knives who had spent an afternoon driving around in a stolen car "seeking to prey on any victims who appeared to have valuable items".

Mr Monsey, who a few months earlier had a severe heart attack, and his wife were injured. Philip Shorrocks, for the prosecution, said the robbery ended when a passer-by intervened with a golfing umbrella. The judge awarded a £600 "thank-you" to three South African tourists who chased Alayli.

At the time of the incident Alayli was awaiting trial for robbing a woman at her home. He was sentenced yesterday to six years for that offence and four years consecutively for the Monsey crimes.

Women hope to ring changes at St Paul's

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

PRESSURE is mounting for St Paul's to admit women to its bellringing guild following the appointment of the cathedral's first woman priest, the Rev Lucy Winkett.

Women can take the ropes as guest ringers at St Paul's, but it is the only one of England's 42 cathedrals to exclude women from its resident guild.

Leading the call for women bellringers is Paul Smith, a former president of the guild. He said yesterday that women in the bell tower were "treated as chattels" and that he had seen them "appallingly humiliated". Mr Smith resigned as a member of the guild in protest over other matters before Christmas.

Eminent women ringers have backed the call for change, which many consider to be overdue, especially in the light of Miss Winkett's appointment as a minor canon from September. St Paul's, whose 12 bells are among the most difficult to ring in the country and whose guild is respected nationally for its expertise, draws its ringers from the Ancient Society of College Youths, a strictly male body.

Baroness Cox, who rings at the 14th-century St Mary's at Monken Hadley, near Barnet, north London, said: "It seems to me that there is tension between long-established tra-



Winkett's appointment has encouraged ringers

ditions, and sometimes traditions can be precious, compared with an attempt to open up ringing in what has been a male preserve. Without undermining tradition, I think bellringing is a marvellous part of our English heritage and would like to see as many people as possible getting joy and satisfaction from it."

She said there was no reason why women could not ring as well as men. "Women have a lot to give and a lot to receive from what is a very precious part of our English heritage. I am not one to

eschew tradition and there may be good reasons for keeping St Paul's a male-only preserve. But, in general, I think we need to encourage ringing."

Jim Phillips, secretary of the cathedral guild, said: "We have six or seven ladies on whom we call regularly. If a competent lady turns up when there is a full complement of guild members, one of the guild will sit down and allow her to ring."

One insider said: "This is not something that has just blown up. Paul Smith resigned before Christmas but at the time he did not mention women as a reason for his resignation. He was unhappy about other things. There are often lady visitors to the tower at St Paul's."

The cathedral has been a bastion of Anglo-Catholic traditionalism in the Church of England, but the appointment of Miss Winkett indicates that under the stewardship of the new Dean, Dr John Moses, changes could be afoot.

Some churchmen and women would like to see girls and women singing in the choir at St Paul's, although there are no plans at present to introduce them. However, senior church figures, while reluctant to be quoted, are also quietly hoping for change on many fronts at the Church's flagship cathedral.

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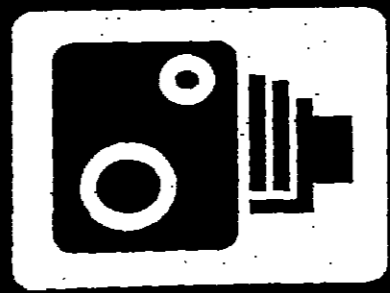
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Protestants and Catholics from Northern Ireland follow Wilde and Beckett to Dublin

Students pursue course of peace across the divide

By NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

BRIGHT young Protestants and Roman Catholics from Northern Ireland are forming new friendships in a rush to study in Dublin. After three decades of being shunned during the Troubles, Trinity College Dublin is resuming its traditional role as the Oxbridge of Ireland.

Students from communities in Northern Ireland have doubled to 600 in the past two years. More than half are Protestants, who steered clear of Dublin at the height of the conflict. Roman Catholic students were once relatively rare because, until 1970, they had to secure a special dispensation from the Church to attend the "dissident" Protestant Trinity founded by Queen Elizabeth I.

The increased popularity is seen as a direct result of the peace process. Rossa Coyle, 18, from Co Armagh, who was educated at a Catholic school, said she barely knew any Protestants until she started her English degree at Trinity last October. Within days of enrolling, she had struck up strong friendships and is now sharing a flat in Dublin with Caroline Jones, 19, a Protestant from Belfast.

Miss Coyle said: "Trinity really is a melting pot where everyone is so friendly. I know lots of Protestants from North-

ern Ireland, but I would never think of asking them their religion. When pictures of the north come on television, I tease Caroline about Orange marches, but it is not serious."

Miss Jones, who is in the first year of a degree in history, ancient history and archaeology, said that increasing numbers of Protestants ventured south as a direct result of the IRA ceasefire, but she had detected a slight chilling in the atmosphere since its collapse. She said: "It was so lovely during the peace. But I would say that I am made much more conscious of the fact that I am a Protestant. Some people from the south blame Protestants because they assume you are Unionist."

Catherine Donnelly, 23, a Catholic from Galbally, Co Tyrone, a scholar in the final year of her law degree, said she came to Dublin because she wanted a different experience. She said: "Dublin is a lovely city and Trinity is such a nice college. There is so much to do."

Trinity once stood out as a symbol of Ireland's sectarian divisions. Known as the "University of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy", a third of its students were Protestants from Northern Ireland, another third came from Brit-

ain and the rest came from the Republic. When the Troubles erupted in 1969, the numbers from Northern Ireland fell to 5 per cent as Protestants avoided Dublin, which was regarded as Republican territory, and enrolled in British universities or stayed in Northern Ireland.

Trinity, which has 8,000 students, is delighted with the new influx. Dr Thomas Mitchell, the Provost, said: "It is very encouraging that students, and their parents in particular, think that it is once again appropriate that they should attend university in Dublin and that they are confident they will be welcome."

The increase means that public schools in Northern Ireland are resuming contacts with Dublin. The Portora Royal School in Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh, which sent Oscar Wilde and Samuel Beckett to Trinity, is having little difficulty in encouraging its students to follow in their footsteps. Richard Bennett, Portora's principal, who studied at Trinity in the early 1960s, said: "I am very pleased. The renewed Irish dimension is important for northern students. I think it is also important for the university to be seen as an all-Ireland institution which it was set up to be."



Making new lives at "the Oxbridge of Ireland": from left, Rossa Coyle, her flatmate Caroline Jones, and Catherine Donnelly. Miss Coyle said: "Trinity really is a melting pot where everyone is so friendly"

Why firms kick bad workers upstairs

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

PROMOTION is a good way to get rid of a poor worker, psychologists said yesterday. A better-sounding job title means that the unwanted employee will look good to a rival firm on the job market.

Really talented people are more likely to stay for money than a title. The hidden benefits of taking incompetent staff and "kicking them upstairs" were highlighted in a US study which examined the employment records of more than 5,000 employees of an unnamed oil company.

Three researchers from Cornell University looked at what had happened to people hired between 1983 and 1988 and who were either still employed or had resigned voluntarily by the beginning of 1990. They were interested in the relationships between employee performance ratings, salary growth, promotions, and other factors, and how these influenced decisions to stay or leave.

Charlie Trevor, Dr Barry Gerhart, and Dr John Boudreau report in the *Journal of Applied Psychology* that promotion is one way of getting rid of poorer performers, because it gives them visibility and legitimacy in the job market. Promotion had no effect on the turnover of the best-performing employees.

These people already enjoyed high marketability, so promotions alone — unless allied to extra salary — did little to discourage them from taking up attractive offers from other employers.

High salary growth helped most to retain the high performers. Because they find it easier to move, their turnover is more highly dependent on being satisfied to stay where they are, which depends on salary growth.

Merit pay systems that fail to recognise the difference between the best and worst performers are likely to contribute to high-performer turnover, they note. "Tomorrow's stars may be among today's few top performers, their retention, at least in part, appears to depend on paying them according to their performance."

Robber paralysed in supermarket raid given £150,000 home

By IAN MURRAY
COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

AN ARMED robber, paralysed from the neck down after being shot by rival criminals during a supermarket raid, is to be rehoused in a purpose-built £150,000 flat and given round-the-clock care at a cost of £2,500 a week.

Gary Mullins, 28, has been a patient at Stoke Mandeville Hospital since April 1994, when he and an accomplice were gunned down by an Ulster loyalist gang who were attempting to rob the same store.

Considered too ill to stand trial for the raid in which he was injured, he will need 24-hour care in the four-bedroom flat provided by a housing association in Islington, north London.

He had a string of convictions for violent crime, and had spent much of his adult life in prison. While in hospital, he was infamous for abusing staff and other patients.

Colin Meek, 26, his accomplice, was shot in the head by the loyalist gang but has made a 90 per cent recovery. Last June he was jailed for ten years for his part in the raid in

Islington, during which the two men threatened staff with a sawn-off shotgun and sprayed them with CS gas before stealing nearly £7,000 from the tills.

The loyalist gang, who had been staking out the same store, shot them as they tried to make their getaway in a stolen car. Three members of the loyalist gang have since received 20-year sentences for attempted murder.

The Crown Prosecution Service decided not to prosecute Mullins for the robbery, in which he was hit by a bullet which severed his spinal

cord. His condition has been stabilised and he has moved from the Buckinghamshire hospital to a north London nursing home while his new flat is equipped to suit his needs. Among the necessary equipment is a small generator to provide back-up for the ventilator which helps him to breathe.

Islington council is responsible for housing Mullins because he was born and brought up in the borough. He is considered a priority case so he has jumped to the top of the list. His flat is on a small housing association estate, half a

mile from the scene of the robbery.

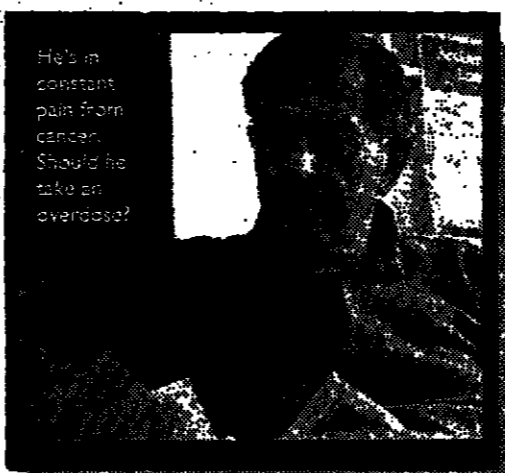
"We cannot discuss individual cases but have a statutory duty to look after people according to their health needs under the Community Care Act, the Housing Act and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Act," the council said. "The circumstances in which someone has become paralysed have nothing to do with our legal responsibility."

Although the council is required to find accommodation, it will not have to pay for it. Rent for the flat will be covered by housing benefit and most of the nursing package

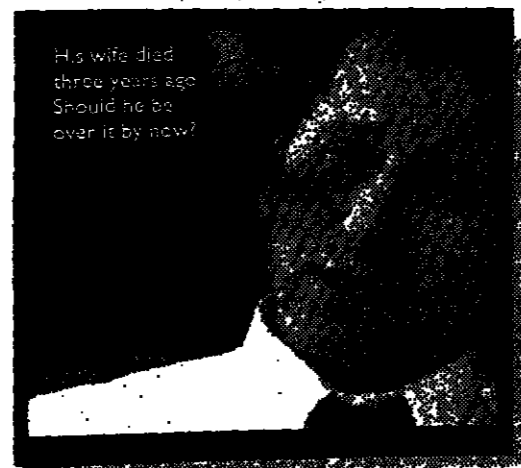
will be funded by Camden and Islington Health Authority.

Sarah Ludford, leader of the Liberal Democrat group on Islington council, said it was shocking that an armed criminal could get to the top of the housing list ahead of law-abiding citizens. "This man has spent his life preying on a community that is now going to have to pay to look after him," Ms Ludford said.

"Everyone has the right to community care, but I would like to be assured that there are not more deserving cases ahead of him in the queue."



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مركزنا من لاصيد

ZORAN DJINDJIC was yesterday elected the Mayor of Belgrade, ending fifty years of Socialist rule in the Serb capital.

Preparations for a street party began in earnest after the vote, and hundreds of thousands were expected last night in the city centre to celebrate a milestone in the Zajedno coalition's crusade to rid Serbia of President Milosevic's moribund regime.

They were lent heart by growing signs that Serbia's federal Yugoslav partner, Montenegro, is growing tired of Mr Milosevic's deadweight, which so straps its economy.

Mile Djukanovic, the Montenegrin Prime Minister, said it would be "totally wrong" for him to stay in power, raising doubts as to whether Mr Milosevic can garner the Montenegrin support he will need to become the next Yugoslav federal President.

that Mr Djindjic had once stolen a leather jacket and a more recent rumour that he had paid two representatives to vote for him. "Who knows what the hell will steal next?"

Mr Seselj, whose friends include Jean-Marie Le Pen, the French National Front leader, has mined a rich vein of political capital from the foreign support given to Zeljko during its 88 days of protest. He made full use of the foreign media yesterday, giving a theatrical performance. "No one has marched behind me since the Nazis in Belgrade since 1944," he said. "You're not electing a Belgrade Mayor, you're electing a *Sturmführer*."

Ignoring the attacks, the new Mayor of Belgrade thanked the people for their

Tirana: President Berisha of Albania dismissed demands for his resignation over the crash of pyramid investment funds and headed to the north of the country in his campaign to win back public support. On Thursday protesters in the capital threw stones at police who fired live rounds over their heads. (Reuters)

He recognised the most obvious problem for Zajedno councils — the bankrupt town halls they have inherited, and the likelihood that Mr Milosevic will attempt to starve them of state cash — but pledged: "Belgrade must become a mirror of Serbia."

Although he acknowledged his Serb Radical Party could not affect yesterday's outcome, Mr Sesej gave warning of trouble, predicting the break-up of the Zajedno coalition. "Djindjic will ruin you," he shouted at Vuk Draskovic, Mr Djindjic's Zajedno partner.

One of the first actions taken by the council yesterday was to order an audit of its Socialist predecessor's books. It also announced a new board of directors, comprising cross-party politicians and journalists, for Studio B, the capital's television station.

Another blow to the Milosevic family was Thursday's assassination of a business associate of the President's son, Marko. Vladen Kovacevic, who owned the "Tref" group of companies, was shot in New Belgrade's Sava business centre.



The four murdered young women, who were identified only by their first names, clockwise from top left, Audrey, 17, Isabelle, 20, Peggy, 20, and Amelie, 17



FROM REUTER IN LILLE

Investigators said suspects had confessed to the murder of the women, whose bodies were found concealed at the base of a concrete blockhouse built by German forces during the Second World War in a forest outside the village of Portel, near Boulogne.

Five members of one family were detained by police. The suspects included three brothers, all of them scrap merchants, who live in a village a few miles from the spot where the women were seen for the last time, police said.

**FROM CHARLES BREMNER
IN BRUSSELS**

Eurostat, the Commission's statistical arm, rejected critics' claims that Rome's special tax amounted to a "fudge" to help it scrape below the budget limit for 1997, set by the Maastricht treaty as a key condition for membership of the future single currency.

The decision was applauded by Professor Romano Prodi, the Italian

Italy's burning ambition to join economic and monetary union (EMU) at the outset is upsetting German politicians who fear that the consequences of letting the traditionally weak currencies of southern Europe embrace the euro.

Theo Waigel, the German Finance Minister, has warned candidate members against "creative bookkeeping", a charge that has been indignantly denied by Signor Prodi. German warnings have come to sound less

While Germany's new travails have prompted speculation on a possible delay in EMU, they have fed hopes in Italy, Spain and Portugal, that European leaders could ease the rules for the sake of keeping to the timetable.

The future euro countries will be chosen by the 15 heads of government at a summit in Britain in little over a year's time. They must also take into account national debt and performance in inflation and interest and exchange rates but the budget deficit is deemed to be the cardinal test.

other controversial budget manoeuvres, including a switch of state pension funds that is helping to narrow the French deficit this year. Yesterday it said the Italian tax, to be levied this year, qualified as a legitimate fiscal revenue because it would not be repaid. It also gave the nod to other Italian measures involving railway investment.

In an emotional speech in Rome yesterday, Signor Prodi issued a sharp rebuke to Germany for its reluctance to accept Italian membership of EMU. "Europe is not just about a currency, it is impossible to think of Europe cut off from its great Latin culture," Signor Prodi said. "German culture cannot represent by itself all of Europe."

FROM BEN MACINTYRE
IN PARIS.

PRESIDENT MOBUTU of Zaire flew back to his holiday villa in the south of France yesterday as South Africa sought to bring together Zairean rebels and government officials for tentative peace talks to end the conflict in eastern Zaire.

Mr Mobutu had an operation for prostate cancer in Switzerland last August. After recuperating in Switzerland and France as Zaire slipped closer to anarchy, he finally returned home in December.

Last month he came back to France for new medical tests and spent a further three weeks in his mansion overlooking the Mediterranean.

During his earlier convalescent periods in the south of France, Mr Mobutu held meetings with various African and French leaders as well as with United Nations officials, but presidential aides did not say whether he was planning any other official contacts during his current stay.

Switzerland has said that Mr Mobutu will not be granted a visa to return there for further cancer treatment, but

France has welcomed the Zairean leader in the belief that he still has enough authority to bring order to the chaos in his country.

In Cape Town, Ngbanda Nzambo Ko Ayumba, the Zairean envoy, who is Mr Mobutu's nephew and security adviser, said that Thabo Mbeki, the South African Deputy President, was talking to both sides in the conflict. "South Africa is trying to bring points of view together and pass one side's point of view on to the other," he said in an interview broadcast here by French radio.

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'Weizman will ask Queen to make state visit to Israel'

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM AND ALAN HAMILTON

THE Queen will be formally invited to pay her first visit to the Holy Land next week during a three-day state visit to Britain by President Weizman, the first by an Israeli head of state since the country's foundation 49 years ago. A senior Israeli official said members of the Jewish community in Britain hoped that the visit might be timed to coincide with next year's celebrations to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Jewish State.

Buckingham Palace said last night that no invitation for the Queen to visit Israel had yet been received, but that if Mr Weizman did invite her to become the first British head of state to make a formal visit to Israel, she would rely on government advice on whether to accept.

Palace sources said that in the past the Queen had received invitations to visit China and Russia, but in both cases she had waited for several years until the political climate in the host country was judged to be suitable.

Spitting fine upheld

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER

SPITTING at the sight of the Cross had led to a conviction in an Israeli court.

The judgment received little publicity when it was originally handed down. But on appeal this week, it resulted in the upholding of a two-month suspended prison sentence and a 750 shekel (£150) fine for spitting imposed on a Jew who saw a Cross near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built on the spot where many Christians believe Christ was crucified.

The Jerusalem District Court heard that the incident took place on March 11, 1995, as a procession of Cross-bearing Armenian priests marched from the Armenian Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City towards the Holy Sepulchre. Moshe Arenfeld was accused of spitting on the ground when the procession

passed him. He denied the act. In the original verdict, Judge Yoel Tsaban ruled that spitting in such a context represented a disturbance of religious observance. He argued that "disturbance does not have to be an act that physically prevents the observance of a ritual".

The judge convicted Arenfeld of religious disturbance. The convicted man appealed, contending that the law grants a man the freedom to spit "even when a Cross is going by".

The appeal stated: "It is impossible to ignore the fact that there is a Jewish custom of considering it a mitzvah [a good or charitable deed] to spit" under such circumstances. The appeal court rejected the contention, arguing that freedom of expression has its limits.

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israeli officials are confident that previous Foreign Office objections to such a sensitive trip would be overcome. "The UK Jewish community feels a royal visit is long overdue," said the Israeli magazine *Jerusalem Report*.

The strongest hint that the Queen will accept Mr Weizman's invitation — which one diplomat described as a "minefield for protocol" — was given in 1995 by John Major, who became only the second serving Prime Minister to visit the Jewish state.

Asked if he would recommend that the Queen take up any future invitation from the Israeli Government, the Prime Minister said: "Prime Minister said: 'very successful visit here [in 1994] and I cannot anticipate decisions Buckingham Palace will take. But I have no doubt that in due course, the Queen will visit.'"

The Duke of Edinburgh's brief but historic visit to Jerusalem and the Holocaust memorial at Yad Vashem was classified as "private". In 1995, the Prince of Wales made a similarly "private" visit to the funeral of Yitzhak Rabin, the assassinated Prime Minister.

While in London, Mr Weizman, a charismatic former fighter pilot who served with the RAF in Egypt and India during the Second World War, will be guest of honour at a state banquet at Buckingham Palace. He will host a return banquet at Spencer House.

At Jerusalem, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, was warned by police he could face judicial proceedings in connection with a scandal over a key government appointment, public television said. Three police officers who questioned Mr Netanyahu told him that his statement may be used to bring charges against him, the station said. Earlier, police said that they had enough evidence to bring charges against at least one senior official in the Government, perhaps within the next few days. (AP)



Millions of biscuits end up on the tip yesterday after an extortion threat was received

Biscuit maker dumps stock

Sydney: Australia's biggest biscuit-maker, Arnotts, began dumping millions of packets of biscuits yesterday after an extortion threat that forced it to withdraw its stock from supermarkets.

Arnotts said it believed that none of the packets, removed from shop shelves in Queensland and New South Wales, were contaminated but it wanted to be "ultra-safe".

Much of the stock disposed of at a Sydney dump had also been damaged when it was cleared last Friday after news of the threat to plant poisoned biscuits in shops was disclosed, the company said.

This week the police called on the extortionist to contact them by next Monday or they would consider the threat ended. The extortionist

threatened to poison the biscuits unless police involved in a 1991 murder case took a lie detector test, adding that police lied in giving evidence that resulted in Ron Thomas serving two life sentences for a double shooting murder he did not commit.

Thomas, who says he is innocent, has called on the extortionist to stop his attempt to free him. (Reuters)

Texan militia at war with US

FROM BRONWEN MADDOCK IN WASHINGTON

HIGH in the Davis mountains in western Texas, a militia group is claiming that Texas is a sovereign nation at war with the United States.

Residents fear its increasing campaign of harassment may provoke another Waco, where members of the Branch Davidian cult were killed in a fire at their besieged compound.

Yesterday, Richard McLaren, 43, who calls himself "Ambassador at Large of the Republic of Texas", was due to appear in court for pretrial hearings on charges of burglary, contempt of court and refusal to stop racketeering. He has said he will defy the court orders.

The group's decade-long campaign of "paper terrorism", which aims to choke the Texas courts and banking system with a flood of bogus property claims and bad checks, has become a focus for Texas's thriving separatist movement. However, federal officials have held back from a showdown with Mr McLaren's group, fearing a repetition of the botched intervention at Waco, eastern Texas, four years ago.

The Waco deaths have since become for Texan militia groups a symbol of the evils of government. Timothy McVeigh, the Oklahoma bombing suspect, cited Waco as a reason for his actions and the opening of his trial on March 31 in Colorado is expected to stir separatist sentiment.

From his tin-shed "embassy" Mr McLaren threatens that if there is an attempt to cut off his headquarters, "there will be a military reprisal". He claims that 2,000 men — the "Texas Defence Forces" — are ready to defend the "embassy".

His group has "ordered" George Bush Jr, state Governor, and all state legislators to vacate the capital building in Austin. More seriously, its "paper war" is costing homeowners and businesses hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees and bad debts. By filing bogus property claims in court, the group has prevented homeowners from selling and forced them to fight court battles to clear their titles.

Elizabeth Taylor recovers

Los Angeles: Elizabeth Taylor

was said to be comfortable and recuperating well yesterday after a four-hour operation to remove a tumour from her brain (Giles Whitell writes).

The two-inch growth appeared to be benign but will be analysed in a biopsy to confirm there is no danger of its spreading. Dr Martin Cooper said after the surgery.

Sobhraj set free

Delhi: Charles Sobhraj, the notorious thief and murderer, was freed when the prosecution withdrew charges relating to a 1986 jailbreak. He will be deported to his native France. (Reuters)

Marine failure

Washington: Riddick Bowe, the former heavyweight champion of the world, was granted permission to leave the US Marine Corps Reserves, on the third day of his training in South Carolina.

Two Sunnis held

Multan: Pakistani police said they had arrested two Sunni Muslim militants suspected of attacking an Iranian cultural centre here on Thursday in which eight people were killed. (Reuters)

Criminal ranks

Lagos: The majority of police officers here are crooks, Abubakar Tsav, the state's police chief told the government-owned *Daily Times*. "They are robbers in police uniform," he said. (AP)

Hostages hope

Lima: Talks to free 72 hostages, held for more than two months, took a step forward when the leader of the hostage-takers left his compound for negotiations on neutral ground for the first time. (AP)

'Unnatural' sex

Oral sex has been declared illegal in Singapore unless it is practised as a prelude to full sex, the island's Court of Appeal ruled. The court said the practice was "against the order of nature".

First B52 woman pilot faces sex charge

Los Angeles: In a blow for women seeking greater opportunities in the US Armed Forces, the first female air force pilot qualified to fly America's biggest bombers in combat is to be court-martialled on charges of adultery and "fraternisation" (Giles Whitell writes).

First Lieutenant Kelly Flinn, who flies B52 long-range bombers stationed in Minot, North Dakota, faces a possible

dishonourable discharge if found guilty of having an "inappropriate relationship" with someone of a lower rank, an Air Force spokesman said. In the meantime she remains on active duty.

After graduating from the Air Force Academy in 1993, Lieutenant Flinn, whose age has been withheld, was certified to fly the B52 in combat two years ago. "In the Air Force, my career has

pretty much been in a male-dominated field, so being part of a largely male crew is nothing new. We're one team trying to complete a mission and put bombs on target," she said on her appointment.

First flown in the 1950s, the B52s have been frequently refitted to drop conventional bombs on Vietnam and Iraq. Based in Louisiana as well as Minot, they have also been used to launch cruise missiles.

North Korea ousts Prime Minister in defection 'purge'

BY ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

KANG SONG SAN, the North Korean Prime Minister, has been relieved of his post, fuelling speculation that he is the victim of a purge related to the defection of a close adviser to President Kim Jong Il, the North Korean leader.

Radio Pyongyang last night reported that Hong Song Nam, 73, the Deputy Prime Minister, has been appointed acting Prime Minister, but gave no reason for the change. In Seoul, a senior official of South Korea's National Unification Board suggested that health problems might explain why Mr Kang, 66, has been replaced. He has not been seen in public since January last year, due to illness, the official said.

The timing of the move has prompted some North Korea watchers to speculate that the defection this month of Hwang Jang Yop, a high-ranking official, has unleashed a purge within the power structure. Mr Kang is believed to have shared Mr Hwang's view that North Korea could overcome its economic problems and famine only by adopting an open-door policy and reforms similar to those of China.

The two men were therefore vulnerable to attack from hard-liners close to Mr Kim, who argued that the radical reforms they favoured would bring down the regime, according to a senior Japanese government source.

Developments in the Stalinist state are shrouded in mystery, but a power struggle

appears to be under way in the run-up to Mr Kim's formal accession to power, expected later this year. The government source predicts a further shake-out of senior figures in the ruling structure close to Mr Hwang, whose defection came as a shock to the regime.

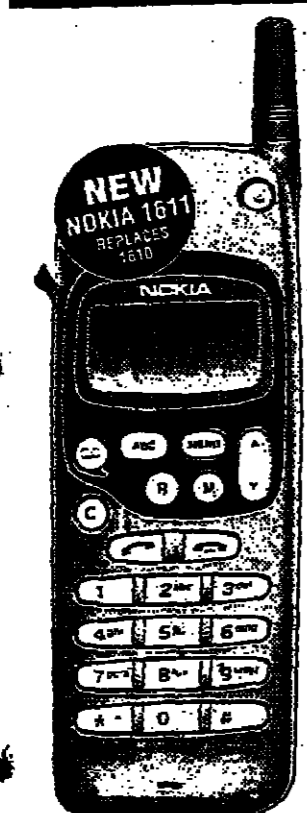
North Korea has reversed its position and said it will attend preliminary talks in New York to discuss permanent peace on the Korean peninsula. Pyongyang had been threatening to scuttle the proposed talks, involving the United States and China as well as the two Koreas, unless it received badly needed American grain.

Its announced agreement comes after South Korea and the United States promised millions of dollars in food aid but it remains uncertain whether the preliminary negotiations will lead to full peace talks. However, the North's decision is likely to lead to an easing of tensions between North and South Korea, which are still technically at war after their bloody three-year conflict in the 1950s.

A spokesman for North Korea's Foreign Ministry told North Korea's state-run news agency that his country and the United States held talks recently and agreed to go ahead with the briefing, set for March 5, according to the North Koreans.

On Thursday, South Korea said it would donate \$6 million (£3.7 million) in emergency food aid to North Korea. Washington has said it will donate \$10 million more.

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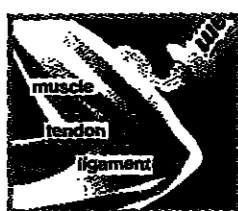
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Seven rivals 'pose risk to Jiang's hold on power'

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Jiang Zemin of China has failed to consolidate his grip on power and faces at least seven rivals for influence within the Communist Party, according to a leaked CIA report yesterday.

His shaky control could keep Mr Jiang focused on domestic rather than on global issues, the report said. An American government official familiar with the report said that although Mr Jiang had shown "remarkable staying power", the real test of his leadership skills, in the wake of Deng Xiaoping's death, would come at the 15th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in October.

Without Mr Deng, Mr Jiang faces the curse of Chinese succession. Although he was chosen by the late paramount leader, history is against him. Chairman Mao's handpicked heir, Hua Guofeng, lasted only two years. Even Mr Deng once admitted that for a leader to pick his successor was a "feudal practice".

The secret CIA report, prepared last June, portrayed Mr Jiang's rivals as trying to limit his power before the party congress, even though he is head of state, general secretary of the Communist Party and commander-in-chief. The assessment, by a CIA section

that tracks foreign leadership developments, was leaked to *The Washington Times*.

This right-wing newspaper is frequently used as a conduit by the intelligence agency for opinions that it wants to publicise without admitting its authorship. A CIA spokesman said she could not comment on the report.

Whatever the CIA's motives, the leak could be construed as a warning, before Mr Jiang's meeting with President Clinton this year, that China needs international support and should not provoke the United States over the touchy issues of human rights and the hand-over of Hong Kong.

The report said that Mr Jiang was expected to pursue "less controversial activities" in an effort to build his own stature as well as China's. In fact, there has already been an appreciable warming of Sino-American relations since the CIA report was written and Mr Clinton was re-elected.

The report identified a key rival to Mr Jiang as Qiao Shi, chairman of the National People's Congress, who oversees national security, the police and courts. It said he was openly critical of Mr Jiang's policies towards Taiwan, had contradicted him in front of regional Chinese officials and could emerge as "kingmaker" for another challenger.

Other rivals included Li Peng, the Prime Minister, "working to undercut Mr Jiang's authority behind the scenes"; Zhu Rongji, the Deputy Prime Minister who disagreed with Mr Jiang over economic policy; and Li Rui-huan, a politburo member linked with Mr Jiang's critics.

Further potential challengers were said to be Tian Juyun, a political ally of Mr Qiao; Yang Shangkun, 89, a former President who criticised some of Mr Jiang's decisions; and Wan Li, the former chairman of the National People's Congress who is said to be opposed to Mr Jiang over policy on Taiwan.

Deng's death mourned strictly to order

BY JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

AS CHINA entered its first full day of state mourning for Deng Xiaoping yesterday, thousands of official commemorative meetings were held throughout the country by local Communist Party committees, government offices and state-run organisations.

In Beijing's Tiananmen Square, police detained a man as he carried a wreath apparently dedicated to Mr Deng. He was bundled into a car along with the wreath, on which the words "Deng Xiaoping" were written on a ribbon, a witness said.

At Mr Deng's birthplace, thousands of weeping mourners fell to their knees. Armed police were summoned to keep order among the unruly in Pifang village in the remote southwestern province of Sichuan where pilgrims with tear-streaked faces prostrated themselves on the ground. "There are a lot of people crying, some of them young, but most of them are older," said an official at Mr Deng's former home, now a museum.

In Chengdu, Sichuan's provincial capital, with its 120 million population, up to 30,000 people gathered on Thursday night to mark the death of their native son, carrying wreaths in white mourning flowers which were placed in large piles. Hun-



Chinese troops, members of a guard of honour for official ceremonies, lay down arms during a drill at their barracks in Beijing yesterday

dreds of students marched through Chengdu's streets carrying tributes to the departed leader, who spoke with a thick Sichuanese accent, and banners bearing the signatures of thousands of mourners.

Witnesses said police had to intervene several times to restore order. The Government dislikes such spontaneous displays that are outside its control.

As portrayed on state television here, there was nothing

spontaneous about any of the official meetings. Their object was to pay tribute to Mr Deng and his policies and to emphasise the need for China's 1.2 billion population to unite around the leadership of Mr Deng's chosen successor, Jiang Zemin, 70, the party chief, a lacklustre and possibly stopgap figure who is nevertheless constantly referred to as the "core" of the new leadership.

Diplomats see these meetings, which all take the same

form and are clearly minutely choreographed from Beijing, as an effort to ensure that the party and state apparatus — and people at large — stay in line, and thus reduce the danger of trouble that any spontaneous, genuine mourning might produce.

"They are terrified of people's human feelings and fear that any outpouring of grief turns dangerous," one envoy said.

Under black banners read-

ing "Comrade Deng will live in our hearts forever", officials paid tribute to Mr Deng's "achievements" and affirmed their determination to carry out the transformation of China he set in motion, a transformation restricted to the economic sphere which did not permit any liberalisation in politics.

No venues have been set aside for people to pay their last respects to Mr Deng. State media reported last night that this was in deference to his wish for a simple

funeral, though it is believed it was to avoid possible trouble. In 1976, when Zhou Enlai, the revered Prime Minister, died, and in 1989, with the death of Hu Yaobang, the deposed party chief, hundreds of demonstrators in Tiananmen Square turned mourning for dead leaders into protests against living ones, and both times troops had to move in to clear the square with loss of life. Tributes, even floral ones, are anathema at Tiananmen.

Hong Kong leader threatens street protests

BY MICHAEL BRYNEN DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE leader of Hong Kong's Democrats, Martin Lee QC, threatened civil disobedience yesterday, including illegal street protests, if China insists on introducing draconian laws to curb Hong Kong's Bill of Rights when it takes over the territory.

"This must be one of the ways for Hong Kong people to express their views," he said. "If the police give us a permit, then we will do it. If they do not, we will do it anyway." His party would refuse to pay any fines they incurred, Mr Lee added that he did not

think he would be arrested because he was too well known abroad. He said, however, that he feared his party colleagues would be.

Speaking in London at the end of a tour of European capitals, Mr Lee said he would challenge the new laws in the courts. If they lost, as he was sure they would once a new law on subversion allowed the authorities to declare illegal anything they disliked, he would continue his opposition to any measures introduced to curb democracy in Hong Kong.

He said he would not emigrate before the handover to China in July. "I feel that the Hong Kong people need a

voice. My party is popular because it is the voice of Hong Kong." He said that the moment he left, he would become irrelevant.

The Democrats hold the largest number of seats in the colony's Legislative Council, but none has been selected for the provisional council appointed by Beijing.

Mr Lee welcomed the announcement by Tung Chee-hwa, the chief executive appointed by China to take over in July, that all civil servants would be asked to stay in their jobs. That was an important signal to the colony, "I am giving him the benefit of the doubt," he said. "If he only says

things to please the Chinese leaders but then quietly does things for Hong Kong, that is the best we can hope for. But there are certain things where you cannot please both sides."

He criticised Chris Patten, the Governor, for not setting up an independent human rights commission years ago. There was still time for Mr Patten to introduce important reforms, he added — in particular, setting up an independent body to administer legal aid, now controlled by a government department. "Do you think after the handover that anyone will be able to call for legal aid for constitutional challenges?"



Jiang: Beijing congress will be the test



Lee: Democrats will refuse to pay fines

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Albright fails to convince Kremlin on Nato expansion

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

DESPITE American attempts to reassure Moscow that Nato is no longer a threat, Russia remained opposed to the alliance's expansion eastwards at the end of yesterday's talks with Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State.

"We are still negatively disposed," Yevgeny Primakov, the Foreign Minister, said, although Ms Albright said that they had made progress on a charter to link Russia to the alliance. Mr Primakov said that it must be binding on both sides and Ms Albright told reporters that question could be worked out.

"The issues are complex and will require a lot of work," Ms Albright added. "We have established a work plan to get as much of this accomplished as quickly as possible. It is on a fast track."

Sergei Yastrzhembsky, the presidential press secretary, said there were grounds for optimism after the talks, although "it is premature to talk about a breakthrough" ... "I would rather say one can express cautious optimism."

Both sides said the atmosphere of the talks had been good. Mr Primakov, speaking at a joint press conference with Ms Albright, who is regarded in Moscow as much more of a hardliner than her predecessor, Warren Christopher, described the Secretary of State as "not just an iron lady,

but also a very constructive lady". Despite the "negative" disposition towards expansion, "we are doing everything we can conceivably think of in order to minimise any negative consequences that might arise in the event that Nato does expand," he said.

Television pictures showed Mr Yeltsin clapping Ms Albright's hand warmly as he greeted her in the Kremlin. In an aside to aides at the conference table, he gave a mock warning: "She understands Russian, so we have to be careful what we say."

Ms Albright brought various measures with her to Moscow aimed at softening Russia's stance against the admission of former Warsaw Pact members to Nato, including adjustments to the arms ceilings agreed in the 1990 Conventional Forces in Europe treaty, which Russia has long argued fails to take into account the post-Cold War situation, as well as the charter defining relations between Nato and Russia.

She also proposed the setting up of a joint Nato-Russian brigade, to be used chiefly for peacekeeping. Russian officials have made clear that they are unimpressed by that proposal, a point repeated by Mr Yastrzhembsky yesterday: "In the alphabet of our interests it is somewhere close to the first letter of my name," he said.

However, the main thrust of Ms Albright's talks was to try to convince the Russians that Nato enlargement was aimed at enhancing European security within a system that involved partnership and co-operation with Moscow rather than aggression and hostility.

"A cardinal element of the new situation is that it will no longer be a situation of 'you versus us'," she said. "We are on the same side. Nato and Russia have a mutual interest in preventing instability and threats to security in the coming century."

The Russian side is still holding out for a legally binding agreement, which would give Moscow some say on future developments as well as setting out limits to the deployment of forces and arms in any new countries to join the alliance.

Nato rejects the notion of a legally binding document, although it has given Moscow assurances that no nuclear weapons will be deployed on the territory of new member-states.

The Russian leadership, wary of criticism from nationalists at home, is certainly in no hurry to reach agreement and eager to wrest as many concessions as possible from the alliance before signing any accord.

Magazine, page 8



President Yeltsin welcomes Madeleine Albright to the Kremlin yesterday. Later, during their negotiations, he remarked in a mock warning to his aides: "She understands Russian, so we have to be careful what we say"

Poles fear alliance 'carve-up'

FROM REUTERS IN BRUSSELS

THE Polish Prime Minister, Włodzisław Cimoszewicz, visiting Nato headquarters in Brussels to promote Warsaw's membership plans, warned the big Western powers yesterday not to make a deal with Russia without referring to other countries.

Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, said earlier yesterday that she had made important progress on a deal with Russia which is designed to overcome Moscow's hostility to Nato enlargement.

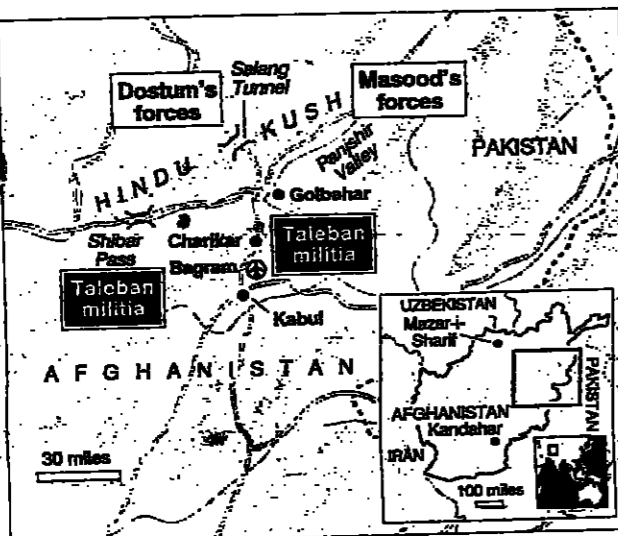
However, Mr Cimoszewicz echoed fears in Eastern Europe and among some Nato allies that the United States and other influential countries might ignore their concerns and push on with a "great power carve-up". Any deal with Moscow, he told the alliance, should be "transparent" and should take into account the concerns of non-members. Poland would not accept any deal that would make it a "second-class" member when it joins.

"In a system of co-operative security, there is no place for geopolitics, spheres of influence, secret protocols or concerts of great powers," the Prime Minister told ambassadors from the 16 Nato nations. "We trust that our Nato partners share this view. We hope so does Russia."

At a Madrid summit in July, Nato will invite some Eastern European countries, which are widely expected to include Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, to join the alliance.

Market panic as Taliban soldiers buy out their enemies

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN MAZARI SHARIF, NORTHERN AFGHANISTAN



KEFAYAT Market, heart of the money machine of northern Afghanistan, sums up the mood of this vast, strategically vital region: fearful, suspicious, and wondering when everything will collapse in another calamity for this devastated country.

Eighteen years of war have smashed and finally pacified most of the south, east and west of Afghanistan; now it is the turn of the north to feel the terror of invasion, which may come next week, in three months or, improbably, not at all.

The men who deal in sackloads of cash amid the four storeys of screaming chaos that make up Kefayat Market are in panic, their exchange rates doubling and halving against the dollar as news of war ebbs and flows.

The Taliban Islamic army, flush with foreign money and with two-thirds of the country under its control, much of it unhappily, is pressing north towards the final prize: the oil and gas-rich provinces controlled by General Rashid Dostum, the Uzbek warlord of the north.

The hunger for news in Mazar-i Sharif, the principal northern city, is

greatest in Kefayat Market, where moneychangers scream over their satellite telephones to Moscow, Tashkent, Peshawar, Kabul and Karachi, changing their exchange rates by the hour.

There are two currencies in Afghanistan, both called the *afghani*, neither worth more than the paper they are printed on. It is symbolic of the state of Afghanistan that its currencies, hauled around like sacks of vegetables, are backed by nothing.

General Dostum prints his own notes by the truckload, probably in Russia, and Taliban has commandeered money from the Government it ousted from Kabul. They circulate

together, albeit at different rates. Taliban's remarkable advance through Afghanistan was halted north of Kabul in October by the forces of General Dostum and his ally, Ahmed Shah Masood, the Tajik warlord fighting for survival in his stronghold in the Panjshir Valley.

Taliban has gained territory, capturing important towns and taking its forces to the last valley, Shibar Pass, leading to the northern plains and an open run to Mazar-i Sharif.

Taliban's secret of success is not to fight, but to pay. It bought its way through Afghanistan, paying enemy commanders to step aside and their troops to join up. General Muham-

mad Yusuf, head of the political section of General Dostum's movement, denied in Mazar that Dostum commanders had been bought off.

He also denied that Dostum commanders had been converting their assets into dollars in readiness to move to the safety of the Central Asian republics should Taliban capture Mazar. Neither denial is convincing: the rumours in the money market, the stories told by prominent citizens, all point to the collapse of morale. The currency has soared in value day by day for the past month, so that it takes only a shopping bag, not a lorry, to carry away the equivalent of \$100 (£60).

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Key suspects in Clinton fund scandal invoke right to silence

FROM TOM RHODES AND BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

TWO key suspects in President Clinton's fundraising scandal retreated to the shelter of the American Constitution yesterday, invoking the Fifth Amendment to remain silent.

John Huang, the former Commerce Department official at the centre of the investigations, and Webster Hubbell, the former associate Attorney-General, refused to submit subpoenaed documents to Congress and invoked their privilege against self-incrimination.

However, in a letter to the House government and oversight committee, Mr Huang's lawyer agreed to turn over some documents and signalled that his client, a top Democratic fundraiser before Mr Clinton's re-election last year, may be prepared to co-operate if granted immunity from prosecution.

Their refusal fuels the controversy surrounding Mr Clinton's fundraising practices, the target of multiple investigations which are becoming the scourge of his second term. The White House faces a protracted and embarrassing hearing even though the nemesis of Mr Clinton's first four years ap-

peared to be fading. Kenneth Starr, the independent Whitewater counsel, announced this week he would leave for an academic position in California in the summer.

He maintained his departure had no bearing on possible indictments against either the President or the First Lady, but the White House was secretly jubilant.

The joy was short-lived. Asian links to Mr Hubbell, a former Clinton golfing friend released from jail last week after serving 16-months for Whitewater fraud, have served to stir the embers of the failed Arkansas land deal.

Fleeting "the fifth" is a move that is not usually used to block the submission of financial records. And the unusual step may prove provocative to congressional investigators.

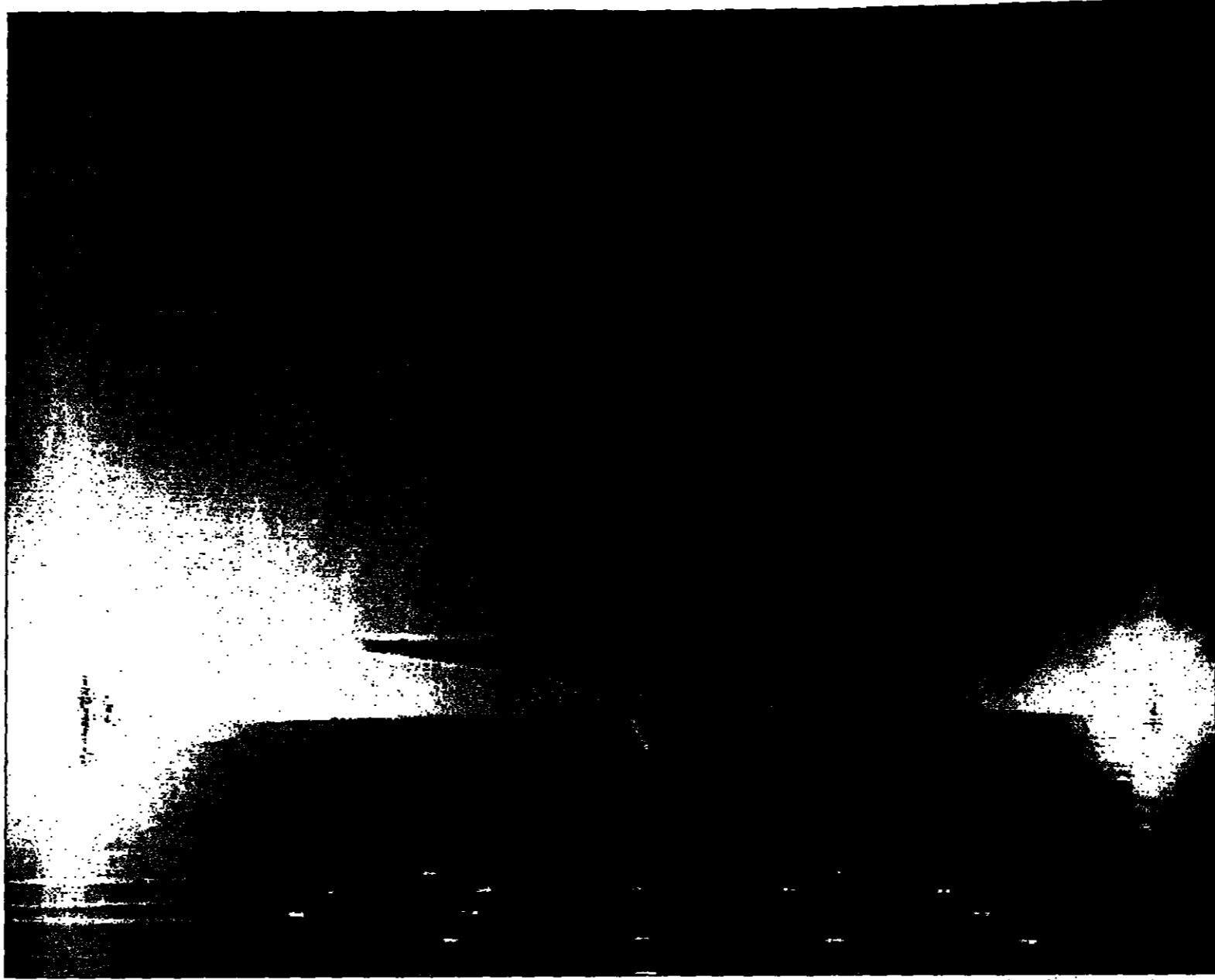
At one time Hillary Clinton's law partner, Mr Hubbell has been implicated in both the Whitewater and campaign finance investigations. He was ordered to produce documents to Congress about payments that he received from Clinton allies after he resigned from the Justice Department amid the growing Whitewater scandal in 1994. Mr Starr had also been investigating Mr Hubbell's receipt of \$325,000 (£200,000) in fees from various sources.

Two other central figures in the funding controversy, Charles Yeh Lin Tria, a Taiwanese former Arkansas restaurateur, and Pauline Kanchanalak, a Thai businesswoman, have also instructed lawyers not to accept subpoenas from the Senate.

The White House said it "respected" the decisions made under advice of counsel but said Mr Clinton wanted "all the facts to come out as quickly as possible".



Starr: relief at his departure shortlived



The space shuttle Discovery makes a rare night-time landing at Florida's Kennedy Space Centre yesterday, ending a ten-day mission to complete a \$350 million (£217 million) overhaul of the Hubble Space Telescope. The astronauts made five spacewalks during the mission

Love letters reveal Fidel's dialectic of romance

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN MADRID

SIX previously unknown love letters, written more than 40 years ago by Fidel Castro, were published here yesterday for the first time, revealing that big, bad, bearded dictator can occasionally be great "softies" too.

The letters, obtained from the Cuban President's estranged daughter and published in the newspaper ABC, were written by Señor Castro to Nany Revuelta, the wife of a Havana doctor with whom he had a passionate love affair.

Written in 1954 from a prison on Isla de Pinos, the letters are an intriguing blend of the tender and the didactic. In one, he pays this awkward compliment to his lover: "I keep all your letters with me and study them more closely than I would a treatise on

psychology." In another, he orders her not to send him a record player — which she wanted to do — as such "luxury" in jail would "mortify" him.

Touchingly, he asks instead for a photograph of Señora Revuelta: "If you do not send me one I will be heartbroken. Why don't you send me more than one? You know I can't see you in person now."

There are some lines of great passion, composed in the stylised manner of a leader accustomed to giving speeches. "You are a woman. Women are the most delicate of all creatures in this world. My companion in happiness, in pleasure, in sentiment, in the past, present and future, in every minute and in a lifetime, you are in the most intimate recess of my heart, where I venerate you and hold you sacred."

In another letter, he writes: "One

kiss is very much like another, yet lovers never tire of kissing. There are phrases that are like kisses, like honey that never dries. This for me is the secret of your letters. They are all delightful, giving me a pleasure of which I never tire. And they are all varied. Like the stars, which shine with a different light each night."

There is also, sometimes, a boyish flavour: "Do you really love me? Swear to me! Even more than I do you?" he writes.

Elsewhere, nervously, he says: "Promise me that my letters don't bore you!" He chides his lover, though, for using a typewriter: "Haven't I told you to write by hand instead of on a machine? If that takes too much time, I won't mind if your letters are shorter. But I do love your delicate handwriting, so feminine, so unmistakable."

In another letter, he scolds her for

addressing him as *amigo* and not as Fidel. Inevitably, though, Señor Castro's politics intrude, often with a great clang. Sentences after writing of his love for Señora Revuelta, he rages against "injustice", demanding that the State "bribe taxes on the rich... and all those who wallow in luxury".

In describing his daily routine, his reading habits are revealed as rather predictable: "I lie down in bed every night at 11, and read Karl Marx till I fall asleep."

In his penultimate missive from prison, he writes the following, almost as if it were a caricature of a love letter from a jailed revolutionary: "I believe that love also has its dialectic: thesis, antithesis and synthesis — just like a revolution, which would not exist without a counter-revolution."

Leading article, page 23

Havana angered by exiles' planned fly-past

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

CUBAN exiles are once again on a collision course with the Government of Fidel Castro over plans for a group of 15 aircraft which plan to drop wreaths over the Straits of Florida near the spot where Cuban MiGs shot down two civilian planes, killing all on board.

American officials say they have briefed Havana on the peaceful intentions of a fleet of 15 aircraft which plan to drop wreaths over the Straits of Florida near the spot where Cuban MiGs shot down two civilian planes, killing all on board.

But Cuba is not happy with the event, which it regards as an act of political provocation, and warned that it "will not permit any type of violation of our territory".

Washington has told Cuban exiles to watch their step and to stay well outside Cuba's 12-mile territorial limits. American officials are especially alarmed by exiles' plans to fly two former Royal Air Force Provost jet trainers, still bearing British military markings.

Officials said the 1950s turbo jet planes, which are collectors items normally exhibited at air shows, may be subject to a restriction limiting them to an area no more than 44 miles south of the Florida Keys, well short of the site for Monday's ceremony. Just in case, US officials plan to monitor the straits with satellite and radar to avoid another confrontation with Cuban warplanes.

The US Atlantic Command also has 30 warships and 100 aircraft currently undergoing military exercises in the Caribbean. However, at the Pentagon, Ken Bacon, a Defence spokesman, said the US military did not "plan any different procedures or heightened alerts on February 24".

The incident last year plunged US-Cuban relations back into a Cold War freeze which shows no signs of warming, and also resulted in an ongoing trade dispute between Europe and Washington over American efforts to extend the reach of its economic embargo against Cuba to punish foreign investors in the island.

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THE TIMES

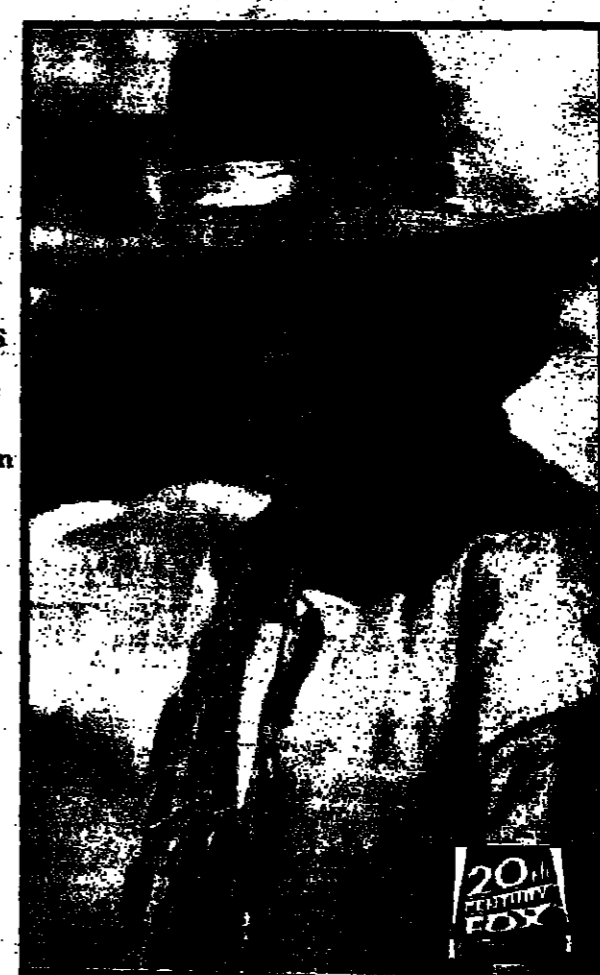
Exclusive screenings of The Crucible

Readers of *The Times* have the chance to enjoy an exclusive preview screening of *The Crucible*, starring Academy Award winner Daniel Day-Lewis, Winona Ryder and Joan Allen. Arthur Miller wrote the screenplay for the film which is directed by Nicholas Hytner (who also directed the award winning *The Madness of King George*). Four tokens and the voucher entitle you to TWO complimentary seats for a screening of *The Crucible* on Monday, February 24.

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CHANGING TIMES

BRUSSEL
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Sweden's welfare ministers fight shy of rendezvous with monetary union

Euro-sceptic women run the show in Amazonia

THERE is a British lager lout view of Swedish women which traces a route from the bouncy actresses in *I Am Curious - Yellow*, through Britt Ekland to Ulrika Jonsson, the Gladiator star.

The cliché centre on Nordic blondeness and a certain lithe athleticism. Well, there are still blondes in Sweden, but the news is that they now run the country and a good many of them are trying to steer the Government away from a rendezvous with European monetary union.

An oddity of the Swedish Cabinet is that exactly half its members are women and they occupy 11 far from marginal portfolios: foreign affairs, agriculture, employment, social welfare, health, justice, transport and environment among them. One woman, Mona Sahlin, 39, narrowly missed becoming Prime Minister last year — she used her government credit card to buy nappies and chocolate for her children — and another is deputy head of the trade union congress. The public services union is led by a woman. Amazonia has taken over in the north.

Since most of the Cabinet posts occupied by women re-

STOCKHOLM FILE

by ROGER BOYES



late directly to the welfare state, which is being pared back in the rush to meet the Maastricht criteria for EMU, it is not surprising that female ministers are among the most Euro-sceptical.

Some owe their appointments directly to Goran Persson, the Prime Minister, and are reluctant to depart publicly from the official line of "wait and see" on the euro. A scattered few, such as the Agriculture Minister, are enthusiasts. But, in common with the women running the trade unions and ordinary Swedish female voters, many are quietly hostile. Only if a solid case can be made for the job-creating merits of the euro will the mood shift.

Ulrika Messing plays a pivotal role in this calculation. She is the Employment Minister and, at 29, the youngest member of the Cabinet. Her profile is typical for the new

breed of women politicians. She did not go to university and rose quickly through the ranks of the Social Democratic Party: she was elected to parliament at 23.

Miss Messing is an unmarried mother and during the week her son, Pontus, five, is cared for by her partner, an unemployed chef. Opposition deputies sneer that she cannot be much of an Employment Minister if she is unable even to find a job for the man she lives with.

"Since there is not a great demand for full-time restaurant chefs, my partner is studying maths and computer sciences to improve his prospects," she explains.

He is, in short, one of the many thousands on training schemes who, added together with the registered unemployed, bring Sweden's jobless rate to 13 per cent.

The growing influence of women on the political system has forced the Government to overhaul its working methods. Margot Wallström, the Minister of Culture, 40, conducts most of her departmental business from home in Karlstad, 190 miles south of Stockholm. She drops off her nine-year old at the local school, takes her 16-month-old toddler son to the day-care centre and then enters her

study for the morning video conference with her civil servants in Stockholm. Working with document scanners, modems and television monitors, she keeps up this rhythm from Thursday night until Tuesday lunchtime when she travels to Stockholm for Cabinet meetings or embarks on foreign trips.

The reason for this unusual work pattern is the death of her three-day-old son five years ago. The death, she says, made her change her priorities but did not diminish her political ambitions. "My youngest son does not understand the job I do. All he cares about is whether I am there to put him to bed."

The slow conversion of Sweden into an Amazonian state has also made the country think more deeply about what constitutes political success or failure.

Ms Sahlin's meteoric rise in the Social Democratic Party — from a drifting dishwasher with no school-leaving certificate to prime ministerial candidate — came unstuck over money. Yet Gudrun Schyman, the head of the Left Party, turned up visibly drunk at many critical political meetings and slurred her way through conference speeches without an eyebrow being raised. Eventually she went to a clinic to dry out and is now back firmly in charge of her party.

The assessment seems to be: women voters feel sympathy for women politicians with health problems, but are the most censorious if there is any hint of financial corruption.



Mona Sahlin, who narrowly missed becoming Prime Minister after she was censured for using her government credit card to buy chocolate for her children

Ice worm eats into Denmark

DENMARK is in the midst of a fierce debate about an ice-worm. That was the code name for a secret American project to make Greenland into a huge nuclear base capable of wiping out much of the Soviet arsenal during the Cold War.

After the building of the Berlin Wall and the Cuba missile crisis in the 1960s, the Pentagon came up with the idea of building a system of tunnels 312 miles east of the American airbase in Thule on Greenland. There would be firing ramps for 600 medium-range nuclear missiles which, soaring over the North Pole, could have reached 80 per cent of the strategic targets in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

The scope was huge: 2,500 miles of piping was supposed to be laid under the Greenland ice; 11,000 American technicians were earmarked for Project Ice-Worm; and the cost was estimated at \$2.4 billion.

The base was never built but the revelations — by the Danish Foreign Policy Institute — have rattled Copenhagen. Since the war governments have assured Danes that, despite Nato membership, nuclear weapons would never be stationed in Denmark.

Yet the United States appears to have had nuclear-equipped aircraft in Thule — one crashed in 1968. Danes are angry that past governments could have let themselves in for this kind of blindfolded membership of Nato and are wondering how many more secrets are hidden below the ice.

Open government

NOT many British politicians, one suspects, could survive the Swedish system of government. Public scrutiny of credit card receipts toppled the Social Democrat crown princess, Mona Sahlin. Under Swedish law anyone is allowed to read the Prime

Minister's incoming and outgoing mail. A few letters to statesmen and on matters of security are classified, but it is quite legal to visit the Prime Minister's mail room and flick through his communications with President Clinton or European leaders.

Danish leader quits over drink driving

FROM CHRISTOPHER FOLLETT IN COPENHAGEN

HANS ENGELL, the Danish Conservative leader, resigned as party chairman yesterday after a car crash — he was found to have broken drink driving limits.

"I have made a serious mistake and must take the consequences. We stand ahead of a decisive political period with several elections ahead and there must be

no doubt about the party's prime ministerial candidate," he said in a statement.

Although his party commands less electoral support than the main opposition Liberals, he was seen as a potential candidate for Prime Minister if a centre-right government were returned to power.

In the accident, Mr Engell swerved off the Copenhagen-Elsinore motorway and hit a lamppost, leaving his car a wreck, and injuring himself superficially. No

body else was involved. Police breathalysed him and found him to be well over the legal limit.

A former journalist, Mr Engell, 48, was a former justice minister. He is to remain leader of the parliamentary Conservative group. Political commentators point to Anne Birgitte Lundholdt, the party's political spokeswoman and a former energy and industry minister, as a likely successor.

Dead boar too 'hot' for French hunters

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE ancient sport of wild boar hunting, enjoyed by danger-loving French kings and peasants for centuries, has become potentially even more perilous with the discovery that a beast killed recently in eastern France was highly radioactive.

A group of hunters in the forest of Saint-Jean d'Ormont in the Vosges region bagged six wild boar on December 8 last year, one of which was found, after testing, to have three times the highest accepted safe level of radioactivity.

The radioactive cloud from Chernobyl passed directly over the region in 1986, and every year since, the French Ministry of Agriculture has carried out extensive tests on milk, water, mushrooms, and other local produce. Until this week, the ministry's tests had shown no abnormal rise in radioactivity, but the discovery of the radioactive wild boar has raised fresh fears that lingering contamination from the Ukrainian nuclear disaster may be worse than supposed.

Two experts from the French Office of Protection from Radioactivity were dispatched to the Vosges this week to carry out further tests on the suspect wild boar or sanglier meat to try to determine the cause of the contamination.

The discovery of the radioactive boar was fortuitous. "A hunter gave a piece of wild boar to a friend in the veterinary services, who carried out his own tests without telling us," Christian Demange, the Mayor of the nearby town of Saint-Dié, who was one of the hunters, said.

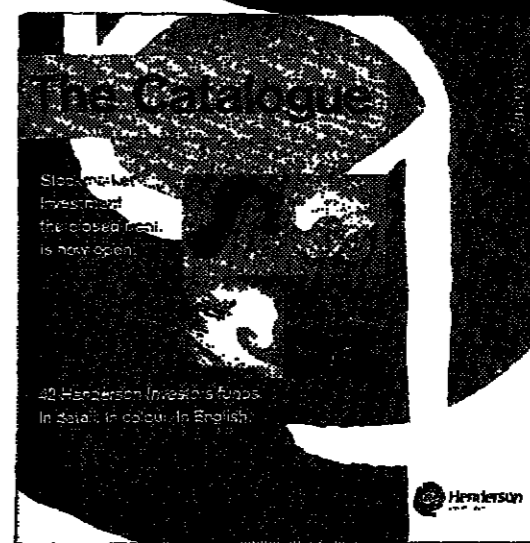
Experts at the Independent Centre for Research into Radioactivity in Paris said the levels of caesium-137 and caesium-134 found in the meat were "characteristic of the Chernobyl cloud".

The sanglier is the basis of some of France's most famed dishes, as well as wild boar pâté, but researchers insisted that boar hunters are still more likely to be gored than poisoned by the beasts.

At this level of contamination, a fully grown wild boar weighing 340 lb would have to be consumed before exceeding the recommended health limit, an achievement of which only the cartoon boar hunter Obelix the Gaul would be capable.

"They ran very fast," Monsieur Demange said of last December's boar hunt. "Now I know why. They were nuclear powered."

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هكذا من الامم

OPINION

Classical CDs: it's not the quantity that counts these days, it's the quality



FILM

Sixties director Sam Fuller is alive and well and living in Paris, and the subject of a Channel 4 season

THE TIMES ARTS

THEATRE

Only towards the end of Mick Mahoney's *Swaggers* does a proper stage play start to emerge



GOING OUT

From Peter Bowles in the West End to the big pop concerts: all the top attractions are in *The Directory*

There are few sights more distressing than that of a record company fat cat shouting about how much cash he has made from selling pop to glib kids. But put that snobbish distaste on hold, you unpopulated lot! This week it is British fat cats who are strutting and preening. New figures reveal that our pop songs are doing for British exports what the Spice Girls do for my tired old ticker. CD sales are booming. Profits are up, up, up. Across the globe, Britannia rules the airwaves.

It's all good news, then? Well, apparently not. In Britain no silver lining comes without a cloud, and this cloud hangs over classical music. Even as the pop moguls hand round the champagne and obligatory splits at the Brits Awards on Monday, the classical music world will be shrouded in *Götterdämmerung* gloom.

Classical albums, it seems, now account for just 7.5 per cent of CD sales. True, they never did great business. The worry today, how-

Spice Girls sell, but noble they're not

ever, is not the quantity being sold so much as the quality. Aside from "celebrity" discs (*Baywatch* with *Flavio* and suchlike) and cult records such as Gorecki's *Third Symphony* that are plugged incessantly on Classic FM, the only classical CDs now selling well are compilations: repackaged hits from old recordings. For new, full-price CDs of mainstream repertoire there is almost no demand. Everything has been recorded, perfectly, 12 times already.

That didn't matter in the days when record companies were run by cultured people. It was accepted that profits from pop songs would cross-subsidise classical records. Pop brought cash, classics brought prestige: that was the theory.

Alas, such benign management was long ago flushed out of the big record companies. Hard-nosed marketing men bark the orders

now, and classical artists must make handsome profits or be axed. It's a regrettable change of attitude, because by subsidising classical CDs the record business was doing its bit to support orchestral and choral life. But the change is here to stay.

So is the classical music world crumbling as a result? It is easy to jump to this conclusion. Indeed, one British journalist has made a career out of writing the obituary of orchestral life, over and over again. And prophecies of doom are often self-fulfilling. If enough people become convinced that classical music is dying, it will.

Yet I believe that classical music has a great future. Am I mad? Probably. But consider this first, although the major record companies may have given up on the classics, plenty of independents are filling the gap. By using little-

WEEK IN THE ARTS



RICHARD MORRISON

known performers and pricing their CDs sensibly, brilliant labels such as Naxos are achieving phenomenal sales.

And the incidental fact that some allegedly famous classical

performers no longer enjoy the endorsement of big record companies is no bad thing. For years they have been charging grossly inflated performance fees on the strength of their supposed crowd-pulling, CD-selling powers. Now that this charade is exposed, our opera houses and orchestras should boldly negotiate much lower fees, cut ticket prices, and attract younger audiences.

Secondly, Britain's concert life now is incomparably richer than it was in any mythical "golden age". Think back just 30 years. London had no Barbican or Queen Elizabeth Hall, Birmingham no Symphony Hall, Manchester no Bridgewater Hall, Glasgow no Royal Concert Hall, Ulster no Waterfront, Poole no Arts Centre, Snape no Maltings... you can fill in the rest. Classical music was stuffily presented for a few hours a

day on Radio 3; now it comes round the clock on both Radio 3 and Classic FM. The great British youth orchestra movement had barely begun: now it is a national glory. And so on. I am not complacent; but any theory that classical music in Britain is retreating in tatters is demonstrably bonkers.

Thirdly, the CD will not be the predominant musical medium for much longer. Classical musicians should be thinking five years into the future — when films, concerts, operas and ballets are piped into every home and school through the Internet or digital TV. The first orchestras quick-witted enough to exploit this potentially vast market will hit a jackpot bigger than anything scooped during the boom years of stereo recording.

Finally, orchestras have a poten-

tial ace to play, and it is this. The pop business largely reduces music to "product" and us, the public, to the status of passive imbibers, required only to buy CDs and play them. By contrast, the most exciting trend in the orchestral world is to involve schools, indeed whole communities, as creative partners. The aim is to remind people that it is more rewarding to be a music-maker than a mere music-consumer. And that task is an increasingly crucial one, because in our materialist age the overwhelming pressure is all the other way: for the public to buy more and more, and do less and less.

Of course classical musicians can never beat pop groups in the commercial marketplace. But why should they? Who says that music's value can be measured only on a balance sheet? Classical musicians should stop fretting about dubious statistics. The noble ideals and aspirations which made them take up music in the first place are more relevant today than ever.

It's all Viennese, cross my jam

IF YOU feel like believing what Mick Mahoney has to say about London villains, you can try out his rhyming slang on the next likely lad you want to postpone dealing with. "Moon," you say, and he will know this is short for mooncrater, ie, "later". If he stares back as blankly as the Moon itself, then either he or Mahoney are having you on, mate. Or "five-bar," as they may well say down at Kojak's or wherever the mob are hanging out these days. Me, I think Mick's definitely got his tongue in his bubble.

This is his tenth play, the first for quite a while, but back in the early Eighties he was churning them out, raw slices of street life that earned him accolades for telling it like it is. For all I know, Nance and Dee and John (known as "the great Moonie"), who work in a swag shop run by Michael and Tess, are all accurately telling it like it is today. It just sounds too much, that's all I'm saying, cross my jam.

A swagger deals in fake designer clothes and perfumes, and as Michael also deals in stolen software this takes him into areas where you don't want to be slow in paying what you owe. I mean, the Baileys aren't the sort of people you cross at all, let alone lightly. The great Moonie has just come out of jail and is sleeping on the premises. Peter Hugo Daly plays him as a shambolic sort of character, but possessed of

a watchful eye and a permanent broken smile that must be seriously traumatising his facial muscles. He's actually some kind of murderer, but basically the hero.

Dee (Carol Harrison) and her niece Nance (Rhona Mitra, utterly riveting in red plastic) belong to a criminal aristocracy that goes back 150 years, so why they demean themselves with the likes of Michael or Tess (Rupert Farley, Helena Cullinan) I never understood. But there was a great deal I failed to understand, even when I had picked my way to the end of a slang-packed sentence and worked out the gist. Mahoney seems to have based his play's structure on television soaps: lots of aggro, voices raised, quick exits.

When the storylines began cohering towards the end a stage play started to emerge from the scraps. I specially liked Dee's "I want to be loved! I want big arguments in Ikea!" It didn't sound real, but then the more Mahoney, who also directs, aimed for the real the more false it sounded. Or the more Viennese, as they properly say at Kojak's.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Swaggers

BAC, SW11

W. Stephen Gilbert on a Sixties film guru getting the TV treatment

The first time I saw *Shock Corridor* was at a late show at the Screen on Islington Green way back in the early Seventies. The queue stretched into and up Upper Street. By the time we got in, the auditorium was chock-full so we found ourselves squatting four deep on the floor ahead of the front row of the stalls.

Made in 1963, the movie was what we then were apt to call "a blast". It just took you by the scruff and shook you until you yelled for mercy.

Shock Corridor is the sixteenth of the 23 movies made by Samuel Fuller. Born in 1911, Fuller is alive, pretty well, living in Paris and one of the last few survivors of the buccannery tradition of movie-making that died out in the Sixties. He has been a true *auteur*, customarily taking the credit "written, produced and directed by", even when working within the Hollywood studio system.

Though filming for Zanuck at Fox and Cohn at Columbia, Fuller chose to keep it small, tight and cheap. Most of his movies run under 90 minutes and were made inside a month. Many of his scenes are taken all in a single shot, requiring from him the discipline of paring scripts to the bone and of editing that never holds a scene beyond its use to the action.

Stephen Frears, who keeps one directorial foot in Hollywood, acknowledges Fuller's inspiration in trying to maintain such a balance. "He wasn't going to do what they told him because that would have bored him," he says, "but he needed the system to make his films. That's what we all want to do, to be in and out of



Sam Fuller, the master at making the most film for the least money, whose work is the subject of a new Channel 4 series and introductory documentary

it at the same time. That's why people like Marty revere him."

Marty — Martin Scorsese — is among several contemporary American movie-makers who talk warmly and analytically about Fuller in a documentary, *The Typewriter, the Rifle and the Movie Camera*, which will introduce a Channel 4 late-night season of nine Fuller classics. *Shock Corridor* ends the run, on March 26. The opener is *Park Row*, a masterpiece not seen on any screen for two decades.

Park Row is a thrilling, moving, hugely dynamic story of "the birthplace and graveyard of great headlines". Fuller's fifth movie, it is his most excitingly realised, with pell-mell travelling shots up and down the studio-built street and his trademark crane shots that abruptly give a (false) sense of opulence.

"That's how you learn to make films cheaply," explains Frears. "Don't muck about. Then, when you can, do a great shot. If you shoot a scene in one, you can ride the schedule. Once you get behind, your back's to the wall." The downside of low-budget filmmaking is that you often have to accept humdrum performances. Fuller only once worked with a true headlining star — Barbara Stanwyck in *Forty Guns* — and cunningly he holds back her first dialogue scene for almost 20 minutes. But many second-division players found that Fuller characters raised their own game: Robert Stack in *House of Bamboo*, Cliff Robertson in *Underworld USA* and, along with Richard Widmark, Thelma Ritter, who was never finer than in Fuller's *Pickup on South Street*.

In the documentary, Fuller's speech to fellow film-maker Tim Robbins veers between the sharp and the plain loopy. He clearly enjoys playing the guru. The producer of *Train-Spotting*, Andrew Macdonald, kept a video diary at the Edinburgh Film Festival the year Fuller was a guest, and old Sam gave Macdonald and his writer John Hodge hours of interview and free advice about their unrealised project that would become *Shallow Grave*. And he cautioned them on handling Hollywood: "Don't worry about the ageing blondes clinging on to you at the swimming pool. Just make what you want to make."

Fuller's own preoccupations — orientalism, the conduct of war and the fate of war veterans, race hatred, the rehabilitation of prostitutes, organised crime — make him in varying degrees unfashionable, but his broad themes and qualities — energy, revenge, redemption, betrayal, creativity — are as urgent as ever.

Perhaps the madness in

Fuller's work speaks most directly to us. In *Shock Corridor*, a crusading journalist puts his own sanity on the line and gets himself incarcerated in a mental institution. Andrew Macdonald reports that he, Hodge and the director Danny Boyle have been asked by both Paramount and Disney to remake this extraordinary picture, "because of the

doctors angle, I imagine". As it happens, when they were talking to the guru, Macdonald found a video of *Shock Corridor* at John Menzies, bought it and got Fuller to sign it. You could say Fuller's signature is on a lot of contemporary young independent filmmaking.

Channel 4's Sam Fuller season begins on Tuesday night

EXCLUSIVE OFFER THE TIMES

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The rich do not need new planning orders to help them build grand houses — but owners of older piles are struggling

Stately homes of England in the lurch

Simon Jenkins

The end was nigh. The medieval house was as down-at-heel as its ancestral owner. But Miss Matilda Talbot of Lacock Abbey could not resist her love of entertaining. Her "hops" in the great hall on winter evenings could not be refused without offence. She combed Wiltshire for young ladies, who came "exceptionally plain and utterly speechless". As James Lees-Milne recalls in his diary, "To an ancient granophone which required winding every two minutes, we danced the Roger de Coverley while the fog swirled against the Gothic windows, and indoors a green yule log emitted such dense smoke that the guests were blinded and choking."

It was a previous PPG, issued by Nicholas Ridley, that spawned the out-of-town shopping centres, caravan sites and bungalow estates that are ruining more British landscape than anything since the suburban sprawl before the last war. Planners and inspectors were encouraged to ignore town centre shopping, consume countryside and pour traffic onto rural roads. The Ridley document is recognised to have been a catastrophe, but the damage is done. The new guidance, from John Gummer, cannot undo this damage. But it wants new country development to avoid such spoliation. It worries over design and seeks to rectify some of the ugliness associated with modern farming. Countryside should be respected and "isolated houses" avoided. So far so good. However, and this brings us back to Lacock, some isolated houses are a good thing. A new

house is welcome if it can "add to the tradition of the Country House which has done so much to enhance the English countryside". Such a house must be "clearly of the highest quality, truly outstanding in terms of its architecture and landscape design". As he yearns to be progenitor of new cathedrals and new bridges, Mr Gummer yearns also for new stately homes.

My first thought is that ministers crave landed gentry status after the election. As they salivate over the options flowing from post-privatisation directorships, they already plan the barony and the Barsetshire estate. A neo-Wrenaissance pile by Quinlan Terry in the Cotswolds would do nicely. But PPG7 must not stand in the way. Hence Mr Gummer's little easement.

This is all most odd. Large country houses are still being built in England. The architectural historian, John Martin Robinson, estimates that 400 substantial "country houses" have been built in England since the war, with no help from PPG7. Architects such as Julian Bicknell, John Outram, Denis Laidun, Robert Adam and Quinlan Terry have designed them. Families such as Getty, Rausing, de Ferranti,

Castle on the North Wales coast, Poltimore House in Devon, Gilside in Durham, Downe Hall, a Palladian mansion in Dorset whose park is on the brink of becoming a housing estate. Mr Gummer might attend to Tortworth Court in Gloucestershire, by his favourite architect, Samuel Teulon.

The National Trust has exhausted its ability to come to the aid of such casualties. The emphasis is back on the private sector. This sector needs no help in building new buildings, but suffers extraordinary government hostility in salvaging old ones. Mr Gummer still imposes VAT on repairs to old buildings, while lifting it from new ones. Grants to restore private houses have been curtailed. Private owners cannot receive lottery money. Running a stately home is to endure a fiercely discriminatory supertax.

What is most astonishing about the past 50 years is not the rescue by public authorities of so many doomed great houses. It is that devoted private owners have stepped forward (or stayed on) to prop up the rest. I can think of nothing bleaker than spending years pouring money into an

ancient pile, its rooms leaking and deserted, its children gone, help impossible to find, the weekdays long and lonely. Yet flip through the official *Historic Houses Guide* and you can read off the names of the wealthy, the dedicated, the eccentric and the mad who have picked up the banner of stately home ownership and carried on the fight.

There are the Cobhams of Hagley, the Comptons of Newby, the Howards of Castle Howard, the Phillips of Kentwell, the Seymours of Thrumpton, the Saunders Watsons of Rockingham, the Cobbolds of Knebworth, the Mountags of Beaulieu, the Weeks of Penhow, the Proby of Elton, and dozens more. I doubt if one of them is keeping up the house to make money. They are struggling to make money to keep up the house. These are the small platoons of private enterprise that we should honour. Here is where PPGs should be aimed and incentives and honours given. Time was when "every great estate deserved a title". Perhaps those times are here again.

What has truly changed over the past 50 years is the acceptance that great houses are not just personal property. When Lees-Milne traipsed

round the "embarrassed" estates of England for the National Trust in the 1930s, he met utter dismay that estates should be alienated from families that had held them for centuries. At Attingham in Shropshire, Lord Berwick was too humiliated even to talk about a sale. He struggled and eventually died. During negotiations at Lyme in Cheshire, Lord Newton "sighed from morning to night, while Lady Newton lay prostrate on the sofa". As the house became liabilities and it all seemed unfair. With some difficulty, the Trust tried to keep some link between a family and its house after transfer. It was not easy.

Today we treat most great houses as in some sense the nation's collective inheritance. Most were built from the tithes, rents and taxes of the community. Like churches, they belonged as much to neighbours as to families. Mark Girouard has shown that houses and castles were open to all comers at least into the 18th century. They were communities within communities.

The grand house in its estate is Britain's distinctive and lasting contribution to European culture. Nobody does them like us. Mr Gummer is right to hope that private owners can uphold that reputation. But he needs a different PPG. New country houses will build themselves. Old ones are the challenge.

Tradition and the politics of Babel

Jonathan Sacks, the Chief Rabbi, traces the origins of our political crisis to the eclipse of Judaeo-Christian morality since the Enlightenment

The *Politics of Hope* is an unusual, in fact unique, book for a Chief Rabbi to have written. It is not about Judaism. It is written, not for Jews especially, but for all of us as members of a liberal democratic society. It is not about religion, except in the most general sense that its central concern is about how we can learn to live peacefully, responsibly and graciously together — a concern which morality, politics, religion and secular humanism all share. To write it, I have had, as it were, to disrobe and immerse myself in literatures I had never before studied. I did so because of my concern about certain acute structural weaknesses in contemporary society, and my dismay at the quality and depth of our public conversation as we approach the millennium and think about our collective future. The book is about a certain kind of crisis within Western liberal democracies, and how it might be overcome by a new and more effective style of politics.

My argument can be stated simply. There are two concepts of a free society, one liberal, the other libertarian. For the past 50 years the libertarian view has prevailed. Shared by British and American politicians on the Left and Right, it maintains that a free society is left free to pursue their own choices. The central question of politics is whether this is best achieved by governments doing as much as possible or as little as possible. The maximalists argue that the task of the State is to give everyone as far as possible the resources with which to pursue their private vision of the good life. The minimalists argue that this is best done by the opposite strategy, namely by leaving as many resources as possible in the hands of individuals.

Philosophically, the debate has been between John Rawls and Robert Nozick. Economically, it has been between Keynes and Milton Friedman. Politically, it has been between the Roosevelt-Beveridge vision of a welfare state and the "small government" programmes of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. But both sides share an

ideal, however deeply they differ in the means they adopt to achieve it: namely, of an arena in which the State guarantees the freedom of the individual to realise his or her own choices. Morality has no part to play in politics beyond fair procedures and the transparency and accountability of governments. All significant moral decisions are to be made by individuals. Indeed, morality itself is a purely individual concern. On both views the key players — the only players — are the State and the individual. Beyond that, as Margaret Thatcher once said, "There is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families."

This is a tenable view, and there is only one thing to be said against it. It has been tried and it has failed. It has given rise to a social order — or more precisely, to a social disorder — more bleak than any within living memory. Today many parts of Britain and America are marked by vandalism, violent crime and a loss of civility; by the breakdown of the family and the widespread neglect of children; by an erosion of trust and a general loss of faith in the power of governments to cure some of our most deep-seated problems; and by a widespread sense that matters crucial to our future welfare are slipping beyond our control.

It is not my intention to criticise the past, second-guess the leaders of an earlier generation, or adopt the false righteousness of hindsight. The politics of the past have run their course, and we must search for a new way.

Fortunately, this is less difficult than it seems. We are able to go back to the writings of those who set out on the path towards a free society and reacquaint ourselves with what they had in mind. As soon as we do this we discover in many cases that their concerns are uncannily like ours, and they had wise things to say which we have since forgotten. Their view of politics was liberal rather than libertarian. Their central question was: how can we create a society in



Dr Sacks: to write *The Politics of Hope*, "I have had... to disrobe and immerse myself in literatures I had never before studied"

which everyone can participate, and everyone achieve the maximum possible dignity? Their answer was not to privatise morality and rule it out of order in political debate. Some important moral issues are private, but not all are. In particular, it is impossible to create a good society without a vigorous process of public debate and without some consensus about the kind of society we wish to create. Nor is the creation of society a matter, simply, of state action on the one hand and the private choices of individuals on the other. Societies are made not just by states and individuals, but also and crucially by what we do, severally, freely and together in a thousand local contexts and constituencies. If libertarianism is a politics of interests, liberalism is a politics of investment.

The good news is that wherever this kind of politics has been tried, it works. Compared to libertarianism, it yields a social order in which we are less vulnerable and confused. Above all, it is the most powerful available antidote to despair, because it leaves us less exposed to forces beyond our

control, to decisions in which we do not have a part. These are my views, but not mine alone. Increasingly, they have come to be shared by philosophers, economists, social commentators and literary critics. Most importantly, they have begun to be adopted by politicians at both ends of the political spectrum — by Democrats and Republicans in America, and members of the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democratic parties in Britain. There was nothing wrong with the politics of collectivism and the politics of private initiative, but their greatest days lie in the past and we are ready for something different and more challenging. My name for it is: the politics of hope.

A vision once guided us, one that we loosely call the Judaeo-Christian tradition. It was not a single ethical system, more a related family of them. It did not answer all questions, and even when it was at its height, there were vexed moral debates. But it taught us moral habits. It gave us a framework of virtue. It embodied ideals. It emphasised the value of institutions — the family, the school, the community — as vehicles through which one generation hands on its ideals to the next. In its broad outlines it was shared by poor and

rich alike, by miners, labourers, politicians, teachers, the police, judges, fellows of Oxford colleges and children in the village school. You could catch traces of its influence from pubs to pulpits to cricket matches. It bound us together as a nation and gave an entire society its bearings.

That tradition has been comprehensively displaced. In its stead has come a variety of substitutes: ethics of work and success, cults of physical fitness, consumerism and salvation-by-shopping, therapies, New Age mysticism, alternative lifestyles, sub and counter-cultures, resurgent ethnicities of multiple kinds, and Internet-surfing as a mode of global identity. Never before have we been faced with such kaleidoscopic variety, but it fails to cohere. It does not provide us with the resources to connect our present with an identifiable past and future. It does not lend structure and stability to our relationships. It does not connect our private desires with a larger purpose of which we are a part. It is less like music, more like noise.

The alternative world we have come to inhabit has its roots deep in history. In my book I follow it back to Hobbes in the 17th century. Others would date its genesis earlier still. It did not come into being as a result of Thatcherism or Reaganomics in the 1980s, or the "permissive society" of the 1960s, or the welfare state of the 1940s. Each of these merely carried further tendencies that were present long before. That is why serious thinkers have understood that what is really at stake in the present debate is the Enlightenment itself as an adequate account of human nature and rationality.

Many aspects of that revolution in thought were necessary and beneficial. We could not undo them, nor should we wish to. But in one aspect it was simply wrong, in its attempt to assimilate our understanding of humanity to science. The belief was that just as science was opening the way to limitless progress in our understanding and control of the physical world, so a scientific morality would create an order of rational, tolerant and benevolent human beings, free of the conflicts and prejudices of the past.

That was a noble undertaking, but like the Tower of Babel it was aimed too high, and the result is that we find it increasingly difficult to communicate with one another. We are left, like the builders of the tower, isolated and confused.

Fortunately, we are not without hope. The Judaeo-Christian heritage never disappeared, and it exists today as a great reservoir of moral energy and aspiration. Nor are we called on to abandon the heritage of the Enlightenment, for it taught us two things that must never be forgotten: that religion is not science, neither is it politics. Religion is not the best way of understanding what is; its domain is in the realm of what ought to be. Nor is it an appropriate vehicle of power. In these respects the Enlightenment was closer to truth than the religious establishments of the day.

But in one respect it simply failed to understand the nature of human society. We are not atoms, held together by the force-field of the State. We are children and parents, neighbours and friends. We are self-conscious beings, knowing what it is to feel the pain of loneliness, yet not willing to abdicate our selfhood in total fusion with others. We seek individuality and relationship — individuality through relationship. We learn to pronounce the "We" the better to be able to say "I". This is born the intricate dynamic of society, beginning with the family and extending outward, through which we learn to trust others and to act so that others can trust us. This requires us to internalise a complex of rules, virtues, dispositions and habits mediating between the self and others, allowing us to sustain relationships without the use or threat of force. As John Macmurray reminds us, these habits are precarious and need constant renewal. "The institutions by which society maintains itself are not natural," he writes. "They are artefacts, and they are maintained by effort in order to sustain the personal life of men and women, and to prevent a relapse into the barbarism of a nearly organic life." As we have come to know all too well in the 20th century, civilisation has a thin skin, and is easily wounded.

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● The *Politics of Hope* (Jonathan Cape, £15.99) will be published on March 6.

On Monday, Jonathan Sacks argues that the realisation of society is the antidote to despair

High times

ONE OF the most dangerous artistic partnerships of recent years is once again on the cards. Ralph Steadman, anarchic cartoonist and wine lover, is about to team up with Hunter S. Thompson, drug-taking "gonzo" journalist, with whom he rampaged across America in the 1970s in the name of reportage.

Steadman has been asked to

appear as a character witness in May on behalf of Thompson, whom he once described as one of the most evil men he knows, in a drink-drive case.

Thompson, who lives a hermit-like existence in Aspen, Colorado, with a Magnum 45 for company, was breathalysed returning from a party to celebrate victory in a

campaign to prevent the expansion of Aspen's airport. The police were waiting for me under the bridge like trolls," he said contemptuously of his arrest.

Steadman met Thompson in 1970 when they joined forces to cover the Kentucky Derby. Later, they collaborated to report on the America's Cup, when Steadman took drugs for the first time. "I kept asking what the pills were that Hunter was gobbling all the time, so he gave me one," he explains. "The experiment was not a success, ending with the reporter and his illustrator painting obscenities about the Pope on the hull of a yacht."

"I'm a different kind of person when I'm with Hunter," Steadman says. "The animal in me comes out." He adds that he will defend his friend to the hilt at the court case in May. "He's a fine, upstanding human being."

Health scare

EDWINA CURRIE has been caught bunking off. After appearing mute and weary at an afternoon gathering of the EU Trade Committee, she failed to appear later in the day at a meeting of MPs and Senators, the gay rights activists.



While Jack Straw, Chris Smith and Lord Russell listened to an especially apologetic note of absence, claiming Mrs Currie was still suffering from a particularly nasty bout of flu, she Currie was spotted lurking into hearty canteen food with a female pal in the nearby Strangers Restaurant. Mrs Currie is now in Estonia and her office would not comment.

Elderly leader

AFTER his blazing-eyed confrontation with Deng Xiaoping's old mucker, Sir Edward Heath, 80, on Newsnight earlier this week, Martin Lee, leader of Hong Kong's Democrats, was leaving BBC when he was called back by a scampering researcher. "Mr Lee,

Mr Lee," she gasped, "Teresa Gorman is on the telephone and would like a word."

Lee, a decent, reasonable man driven to rage by Heath's rude dismissals of his efforts to preserve democracy in Hong Kong, went back in to take the call. Having introduced herself and congratulated him on his performance against Heath, she said: "You dealt with Deng for years; we've had to deal with Sir Edward for more than 20." Lee quite sympathised.

● The saintly cookery writer *Della Smith*, who was recently appointed



"Look at it this way, we've missed 18 years under the Tories"

a director of Norwich City Football Club, has her work cut out at the club ground where she has hopes of opening a brasserie. A national survey in *Total Football* magazine rated the meat pies on sale at Norwich the worst of any football ground in England.

Gay pride

YET MORE discomfort for the Conservative Party with news that the lion starring in their latest round of advertising has been behaving over-fondly with a male lion friend.

For two days each week, the lion is locked in a cage with his thum and together they frolic, tease and gambol in a manner that regards onlookers of Christopher Isherwood in prewar Berlin.

At Conservative Central Office, which is locked in battle with Downing Street over the effectiveness of the advertisements, the beast has a nickname: Dandy Lion.

Needed

TONY BLAIR branched into fashion at the *What the Papers Say* Awards in London yesterday, de-



Cherie Booth: woolly

fending the sweater that his wife was photographed wearing recently when off-duty at the weekend. Cherie Booth had been snapped leaving a supermarket in a thick woolly jumper far removed from her usual wear.

"My wife has appeared in the newspapers over the last few days," the Labour leader said. "That jumper that she wore, look, I bought that jumper. Greater love hath no woman than to give up her fashion taste for her husband. I still like it and that's as defiant as I'm going to get. And it did not cost £300."



GUIDE IN PERPLEXITY

A rabbi's brief history of our time

Rabbi means "my master" or "teacher of the law". Where other faiths have priests or pastors, Judaism has rabbis. Hence many of the most influential teachers in history have been Jewish, from Moses and Jesus to Marx and Freud. Great crises often produce great teachers. In the late 12th century, a period of bewildering political and intellectual change in Europe, Rabbi Maimonides wrote his *Guide for the Perplexed*, combining the best of Jewish and gentile thought. As our own catastrophic century ends, many people in the Western democracies find themselves in a different but no less profound perplexity. Many would welcome guidance in our political and moral crisis, though religious leaders are nowadays rarely as persuasive as such a guide needs to be. In Dr Jonathan Sacks we may have found one.

The Chief Rabbi's wise learning, didactic gifts and personal charisma are attested by his previous appearances on the secular stage, such as his 1990 Reith Lectures. *The Times* has championed his forthright views on the role of religion, and has also supported his courageous but controversial attendance this week at a memorial meeting for the late Rabbi Hugo Gryn.

Now Dr Sacks has written a remarkable book, addressed to Jews and non-Jews alike, drawing on the best of contemporary secular thought. The first of three extracts appears in *The Times* today. *The Politics of Hope* would be remarkable simply as a compendium of scholarship; it is, indeed, a brief history of our time. But it is more. The Chief Rabbi crisply analyses the malaise already identified by Frances Lawrence and others, and offers his own solution.

The problem as he sees it is the progressive demoralisation of liberal society since the Enlightenment, and especially over the past half-century. The rise of the welfare state and its dependency culture, of the permissive society and libertarian individualism, have in Dr Sacks's view extended throughout society an atomistic view of human nature which was until recently confined to an educated elite. This libertarian revolution involved the sacrifice of an older,

less selfish and materialistic view of the good life, according to which man is a social animal, rooted in the polis. It also meant the carving up of the public sphere, and the privatisation of morality.

The solution follows naturally: demoralisation must be met by remoralisation. That, of course, is easier said than done; Dr Sacks is not so naive as to suppose that appeals for moral regeneration will readily reduce the crime statistics, or that sermons which have failed to fill the churches and synagogues will somehow galvanise a cynical secular society. But he believes passionately that a moral transformation which has happened before can happen again: just as it did thousands of years ago in the Holy Land, and just as it did in Victorian Britain. In each case the secret resource was the same: the Judeo-Christian tradition encodes a strategy for moral recovery.

What Dr Sacks means by "the politics of hope" is a prophetic, not an apocalyptic or despairing, view of society. That means faith in the moral basis of humanity. After Dunblane, Dr Sacks says that he, like countless others, experienced a moment of national self-awareness. "Morality," he writes, "is civilisation's greatest attempt to humanise fate."

This rich and eloquent book is vulnerable to selective quotation. It will be plundered on the Left, for whom his diagnosis of contemporary ills is more useful than his austere "politics of responsibility". On the Right, his message may be oversimplified into a crude authoritarianism. His espousal of American communitarianism will not appeal to all, though he imposes his own distinctive rigour on an often woolly-minded movement. His erudition sometimes leads him to cite with enthusiasm thinkers whose ideologies he does not share: thus he quotes approvingly from John Macmurray, Tony Blair's mentor, though he has little in common with the Scottish philosopher's ethical socialism. But such eclecticism is a strength, not a weakness, in a book which deserves to become a key text, not only during the election campaign, but long after.

TOO LONG TO LANGUAGE

The Bridgewater Four were scandalously treated

It has taken 16 years for the men convicted of murdering Carl Bridgewater to prove their innocence. One of the four, Patrick Molloy, died in jail, disputing his conviction to the last. He has been deprived of the joy that the other three felt yesterday as they were released by the Court of Appeal to breathe London air for the first time since James Callaghan was Prime Minister.

There can be few greater crimes that the State can commit than depriving innocent people of their liberty. These men have spent what should have been the best years of their lives in jail. Though no sum of money could ever wipe out the trauma that they have suffered, they should nonetheless be handsomely compensated.

But while Michael and Vincent Hickey and James Robinson readjust to the world of computers, video recorders, out-of-town supermarkets and Tory governments, the Home Office should be examining how this wrongful conviction could have been allowed to stand for so long. It should also try to ensure that the policemen who secured the conviction are themselves brought to justice.

For the evidence which eventually led to the men's release showed tampering on a criminal scale. Mr Molloy always claimed that he had been tricked and intimidated into signing a false confession. He was shown a confession that one of the other co-accused, Vincent Hickey, had allegedly signed. The new evidence produced to the Court of Appeal showed that the Hickey "confession" had been forged by policemen from the No 4 Regional Crime Squad.

LOVE, FIDEL

Castro reveals a cuddly side in letters to his mistress

Six love letters, previously unpublished, have just surfaced in Spain. Written by Fidel Castro over four decades ago to Natty Revuelta, his mistress, they are not the greatest examples of the epistolary art. Self-conscious, didactic and much too long, they are uncomfortably like his rambling speeches to the captive and the faithful.

As our Madrid correspondent writes today, some lines in the letters reveal Señor Castro in his true colours. "I believe that love also has its dialectic: thesis, antithesis and synthesis — just like a Revolution, which would not exist without a Counter-revolution." Now that is the man we know so well, the inflexible ideologue with whom Cuba has had to put up for nearly 40 years.

But wait: that is not the whole picture. The letters occasionally reveal an awkward and touching tenderness. Señor Castro was capable of penning some quite cuddly stuff. Consider these lines, in another letter to Natty: "What does 'me too' mean at the end of your letters? Ah! I know... Do you really love me? Swear to me! Even more than I do you?" Elsewhere, impressively amorous, he promises to crush her in his arms "like a power", and to hold her "sacred, in the intimate recesses of the heart".

Letters to lovers and spouses written by the famous often provide clues to their personalities which one would struggle to find elsewhere. The revelations are not always flattering. Albert Einstein's letters to

The evidence arose out of an "Esda" test on Mr Molloy's confession, which revealed the imprint of the forged signature written on the page above. Since Mr Hickey was several miles away in another police station, being questioned by different detectives, the confession could not have been genuine. Mr Molloy's claim that he had been shown this forgery was never believed in the many reviews of the case since 1978.

Tragically, the Hickey signature was discovered in 1990, but until two weeks ago nobody realised its significance. Great credit should go to Jim Nichol, solicitor to the men, who decided to go back over all the evidence in preparation for their latest appeal. Mr Molloy's confession was always crucial to the case against all three men since there was no forensic evidence linking them to the scene, no murder weapon and no witnesses.

The West Midlands Serious Crime Squad, which included the detective who falsified Mr Hickey's signature, was wound up in 1989 after evidence came to light of other fabricated confessions and planted evidence in 23 cases during the 1980s. There is much less chance of such behaviour happening today, with the safeguards introduced by the Police and Criminal Evidence Act. And although police forces still feel under pressure to secure convictions, particularly in child murders, the police culture is gradually changing. But the Government owes it to these three men — and to the memory of the fourth — to inquire into the circumstances of this miscarriage of justice. It must never be allowed to happen again.

his wife, for example, show him to have been a cold-blooded male chauvinist who loved her less than his equations.

Bertrand Russell, too, is ill-served by his letters. Writing to Ottoline Morrell, he shows that his eloquence could desert him when he moved from philosophy to passion: "Loving you is like loving a red-hot poker, which is a worse bedfellow than even Lytton's Umbrella; every caress brings on agony." And only this week, serious posthumous damage was done to the feminist reputation of Simone de Beauvoir when old letters to an American lover revealed that she referred to herself as "an obedient Arab wife" and a "little loving frog".

It is refreshing, however, when love letters of the famous betray the baser instincts. No one can read this line from Flaubert's letters to Louise Colet — with its stylish mixture of irony and lust — and not warm to the man who gave us *Madame Bovary*: "Yes, for me you are a diversion, but one of the best. The most complete kind. You relieve me emotionally, for the thought of you fills me with tenderness and my heart reposes on that thought just as when I lie on you." Flaubert's efforts were better than Señor Castro's, naturally, but the latter's letters have their own potent romance. The real pity, of course, is that the young Cuban writer of love letters grew into a long-winded old Communist tyrant. It must have been that damned dialectic.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Demand by life insurers for evidence of genetic tests

From the Chair of the Huntington's Disease Association

Sir, I very rarely find myself bating for the insurance industry but I do feel that your report of February 19, "Life insurers demand gene test results", may unnecessarily alarm those affected by inherited conditions.

When applying for life insurance, disclosure of a genetic test result has always been a requirement. Failure to disclose a genetic test result, could result in a policy being declared void. People attending genetic clinics for pre-test counselling are advised to examine their insurance requirements before taking a test.

In the case of Huntington's disease it is usually possible to obtain insurance if you are "at risk" as indicated by your family history, albeit with loaded premiums (averaging 50 per cent). However, hitherto, if you had received a positive test result, indicating that at some future time you would develop Huntington's disease, your chances of obtaining life insurance would have been negligible.

The policy statement by the Association of British Insurers changes this situation in limited circumstances — i.e. people applying for life insurance for a sum of up to £100,000 linked to a new mortgage will still be required to reveal the result of any genetic test; but, if the test is positive and would therefore normally have been to the detriment of the applicant, the result will be disregarded. Family history will continue to be taken into account. In effect this is an improvement for people in this situation.

Meanwhile, as an association, we shall continue to advise our members to seek independent advice with regard to insurance requirements before embarking on a genetic test. It is important for people to apply to companies that look more favourably on those at risk of an inherited condition and to avoid being refused insurance.

Yours sincerely,
SUE WATKIN, Chair,
Huntingdon's Disease Association,
108 Battersea High Street, SW11,
February 19.

From Professor David de Bono

Sir, When I was first introduced to medical aspects of insurance some 20 years ago, I inquired why smokers were charged much the same premiums as non-smokers. I understood that the insurance companies were well aware that smokers constituted a higher risk group, but the proportion of smokers among those seeking insurance was so high that companies discriminating against them would lose business. If and when the proportion of smokers diminished, discriminating rates would be introduced.

This has indeed come about. I suspect that the reverse situation will eventually apply to those undergoing genetic testing: as and when it becomes commonplace it will cease to identify a high risk population, and market forces will drive insurers to accept reasonable risks at appropriate premiums. In the meantime, what worries doctors and patients is that many insurance companies seem to regard genetic testing as providing a categorical (yes/no) answer rather than simply contributing, along with clinical and actuarial data, to an accurate quantification of risk.

The price to be paid for compulsory disclosure of genetic information may need to be the adoption of a voluntary or statutory code of practice on its use. This is important if further advances in medical research and patient care are not to be seriously handicapped.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID DE BONO,
University of Leicester,
Department of Cardiology,
Glennfield General Hospital,
Leicester LE3 9QP.

From Mr K. D. Boyd

Sir, The benefits of ever-advancing knowledge in genetic make-up outweigh the harm. The more we know, the better the prospect for mankind.

I suspect that when the shouting has died down the practice of excluding or loading the insurance of impaired lives will be as difficult with the new knowledge as it was before. There are a number of sufferers from

life-threatening conditions who can obtain cover today, provided they can prove they have come to terms with their defects and have the discipline to live with them.

Would anyone insure with a company known to ignore relevant information? Such behaviour involves paying claims that foresight could have excluded, thus reducing the benefits to other shareholders or policyholders. An underclass of the uninsurable already exists. Would not a dramatic increase in this underclass tempt an ingenious insurer to enter this market? That is what has always happened in the past.

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH BOYD,
Boyd & Associates
(Independent financial advisers),
The Oast House,
Holt Pound, Farnham, Surrey,
February 19.

From Mr Panos C. Mavron

Sir, The insistence of insurers on knowing the results of voluntary DNA tests raises serious issues that must be addressed by the next government. Being health-conscious I volunteered for an ECT test several years ago, even though I was, and remain, perfectly healthy. The test showed that I had a slightly abnormal heart rhythm. As a result insurance companies refused to insure me.

My GP said there was nothing to worry about as not everybody has the same heart rhythm, and later examination by two consultant cardiologists, which included a full workout on a treadmill, confirmed that I am healthier than most and that, so long as I continue with my healthy lifestyle and remain fit, I should live a normal lifespan. I have thus been punished for showing an interest in my health.

Yours faithfully,
PANOS C. MAVRON,
71 Linden Way, Southgate, N14,
February 19.

Weekend Money letters, page 43

Anti-Semitism in Shakespeare's eyes

From Mr Peter Bassano

Sir, Jeremy Kingston (review of *The Merchant of Venice*, February 14) describes the play as "Jew-hating, Jew-baiting, Jew-spitting". There is nothing new in this perception of Shakespeare's anti-Semitic portrait of Shylock. *The Merchant* has been banned from schools and theatres in several countries because of this perception.

Jews were officially proscribed in Elizabethan England, but that didn't mean Shakespeare never met one: despite the exclusion law there were several at court, including the Lupo and Bassano families of royal musicians, and Rodrigo Lopez, Portuguese physician to the Queen, who are identified as having Jewish backgrounds.

In 1594 Dr Lopez was charged with trying to poison the Queen. He was tortured, confessed, found guilty, and executed. This episode sparked off xenophobic fervour in which Marlowe's truly anti-Semitic play, *The Jew of Malta*, was revived to public acclaim. Some may think that the Lopez affair caused Shakespeare to start work on *The Merchant*.

In 1973 Dr A. L. Rowse, working from the diaries of the Elizabethan astrologer Simon Forman, identified Emilio Bassano, daughter of Baptist Bassano, one of the Queen's Venetian Jewish musicians — from whose uncle, Antonio, I claim descent — as the Dark Lady of the sonnets (details, January 29, 1973). In recent years a number of scholars have presented literary and historical arguments to support Dr Rowse's identification.

Given the inconsistency of Elizabethan spelling, Bassano would have been recognised by a contemporary audience as Jewish. How can Shakespeare have created in Shylock an anti-Jewish stereotype, since Bassano, his antagonist, was Jewish too?

Yours etc,
PETER BASSANO,
(Head of Brass Faculty,
Royal College of Music),
Stonewell Farm,
Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire,
February 17.

Christians in Pakistan

From the Imam of the London Mosque

Sir, The recent persecution of Christians by the so-called followers of Islam in Pakistan (report, "Pakistan Muslims force Christians to abandon homes", February 13) is deplorable and yet another example of the repeated violation of human rights in Pakistan. All that it achieves is a bad name for Islam.

Followers of Islam, or for that matter any religion, should not violate the peaceful teachings of their faith and tarnish its image in the eyes of others. No religion permits this. The real culprit are those who ignore and violate the teachings of their religion and desecrate it.

Yours sincerely,
A. M. RASHED,
Imam, The London Mosque,
16 Gressendall Road, SW18,
February 15.

Church clappies

From the Reverend Richard Warden

Sir, Despite the breathtaking beauty of Cranmer, it seems fanciful to suggest that a return to the Book of Common Prayer will in itself encourage people to attend the church of today (letters, February 13). The problem of falling numbers at worship must be addressed at a deeper level.

Given the legislative onslaught on the traditional Sunday in recent years and the subsequent change in behaviour patterns in our society, is it any surprise that people attend church less often?

Yours sincerely,
RICHARD WARDEN (Chaplain),
Wycombe Abbey School,
High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire,
February 13.

End of the line?

From Mr Roger Hand

Sir, On the basis that every scheduled train actually must make a pair of journeys — out and back — does the odd number of journeys (39) that South West Trains proposes to cancel each day (report, February 18) mean that, sooner or later, all its trains will end up in Poole or some other extremity of its network?

Yours etc,
ROGER HAND,
Cottage 4, Kintbury Mill,
Kintbury, Berkshire,
February 18.

Stops and starts

From Mr Tom Courtenay

Sir, When trains near their destination nowadays, a strangled voice often announces: "We are now approaching so and so, where this train will terminate." No it won't. Surely in the majority of cases it will go on to have many more happy journeys.

Yours sincerely,
TOM COURTENAY,
c/o Wyndham's Theatre,
Charing Cross Road, WC2,
February 20.

EU brinkmanship

From Mr Walter Cairns

Sir, Christopher Jackson, MEP, is wrong to assert (letter, February 19) that the recent vote in the House of Lords on our relationship with the EU amounted in effect to a decision to leave the European Union. The Upper Chamber merely voted to reassert the principle of UK law over EU law by making certain changes to the 1972 European Communities Act. That does not amount to EU withdrawal.

In 1965, the French Government refused to take up its seat at the Council of Ministers. In effect this amounted to issuing the Community authorities with an ultimatum: either you accept our terms or you expel us. This tactic proved successful, as it resulted in the 1966 Luxembourg Agreement, which enshrined the national veto.

The EU would be faced with the same dilemma towards Britain if the House of Lords' resolution was translated into legislation. My guess is that, since expulsion of a member state is a political impossibility, the EU would have to submit to the British Parliament's wishes. This would at least ensure that the wishes of an elected body took precedence over those of unelected bureaucrats.

Yours sincerely,
WALTER CAIRNS,
Broomhurst Hall,
836 Wilmslow Road, Manchester,
February 10.

From Mr Antony Snow

Sir, It does not seem to have occurred to the EU Economic and Social Committee that the reason for "the generally negative stance towards Europe adopted by members of the two major political parties in the run-up to the election" is that they will get more votes that way.

The British electorate has over the years shown an unerring sense of what is good for it. Only those writing from the sanctuary of Brussels would believe that they know better.

Yours faithfully,
ANTONY SNOW,
16 Rumbold Road, SW6.

Labour fisheries policy

From the Shadow Minister of Food, Agriculture and Rural Affairs

Sir, Contrary to your report, "Fishermen accuse Labour of breaking quota-hopping pledge" (February 19), there has been no change in Labour's position on quota-hopping. Our determination to see this matter resolved remains unaltered. Labour has not ruled out refusing to agree conclusions of the EU's intergovernmental conference if such conclusions do not address the problem of quota-hopping.

Quota-hopping will be a priority negotiating objective of a Labour government at the IGC.

Yours faithfully,
GAVIN STRANG,
House of Commons,
February 11.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

Decline of the Unions?

From the President of the Cambridge Union

Sir, The fact that Oxford has problems attracting students to serious debates ("The declining state of the Union", Michael Gove, February 14) will surprise no one at Cambridge.

The Prime Minister must take his share of the blame after his attack during yesterday's Question Time on Mr Blair of "pathetic political point-scoring, barely worthy of a student debating society". As almost every Cabinet heavyweight is Union-sprung, and few if any of Labour's are, he should perhaps choose his insults more carefully.

We recently invited the Prime Minister to attend a debate here, to remind him that decorum is born at Oxbridge and lost at Westminster, but he declined.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW LEEK, President,
The Cambridge Union Society,
9a Bridge Street, Cambridge,
February 14.

From Mr Matthew J. Howard

Sir, Michael Gove argues today that the Oxford Union is now displaying a

News output on BBC

From the Chief Executive of BBC News

Sir, The reporting of our plans to review our news output led to a speculative piece about the *Today* programme in your pages ("Why we must save the Gang on Four", Media and Marketing, February 19).

Perhaps I can clarify our intentions. We haven't reviewed our output comprehensively for ten years and I believe it's time for us to look in detail at the ways in which audiences are viewing and listening to BBC News. Our programme-makers will also be a part of this process. As it happens we are in a strong position. The *Today*

programme, for example, has more listeners than any other radio news programme.

Your article claims that "conclusions have been reached and leaked before the process has begun". These are not the conclusions of the review team, which has not yet met.

The review team may recommend changes; it may not. What is not in doubt is our responsibility to serve all audiences with programmes which maintain the journalistic values of impartiality, accuracy and integrity.

Yours faithfully,
TONY HALL,
Chief Executive, BBC News,
Television Centre, Wood Lane, W12,
February 20.

Surname usage

From Professor Gerald Dix

Sir, Old name habits undoubtedly die hard. Within the past decade or so it has been my experience to find a highly formalised system operating within a university. The registrar, being of equivalent status to a professor, always addressed lecturers and readers as Mr or Dr but, as they were his equal, professors were addressed by surname alone. A (very) few of the more senior professors, such as deans or pro-vice-chancellors, with whom he worked closely, were addressed by their first names in some of the less formal meetings.

And I have a typed letter from Dr Arnold Toynbee, written in 1969, beginning "Dear Mr Dix" and ending "Yours very sincerely", with a manuscript addition below his signature saying: "Delete the 'Mr'. It looks terribly formal. A.J.T.". We were friends and colleagues, but with an age difference of almost forty years, so I continued to address him as Dr Toynbee.

Yours faithfully,
GERALD DIX,
13 Friars Quay, Norwich.

Battered brides

From Dr Trevor G. Stammers

Sir, It is not only in the Church of Scotland that clergy bear their wives and scripture is used to justify the violence (report, February 10). In researching my recent book, *Love Lies Bleeding*, I found evidence of domestic brutality in many churches right across the denominations. One woman I interviewed was regularly beaten for 15 years by her husband, a deacon in an independent evangelical church.

Church leaders counselling women to stay in such situations would do well to remember that it is the violence that separates "those whom God has joined together", not the wife who flees to escape it.

Those who too glibly quote "I hate divorce" (the first words of Malachi ii, 16) rarely know that the verse (in the New International Version) continues "and I hate a man's covering himself (or his wife) with violence".

Yours faithfully,
TREVOR STAMMERS,
25 Beaford Grove,
Merton Park, SW20,
February 10.

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22 1997

High Court finds for Hoechst to settle battle over patent BP faces \$100m damages bill

By FRASER NELSON

BRITISH PETROLEUM is facing damages of more than \$100 million after the High Court found that it had infringed a patent belonging to Hoechst, the German chemicals group.

The oil company is understood to be heading for the heaviest patent damages claim in British legal history. It was found to have been using a filter patented by Hoechst Celanese for six years, and could now be forced to hand over every penny of profit that it made.

BP, the world's largest producer of acetic acid, said yesterday that while it was phasing out all use of the patented filter, it was still appealing against the decision. It added that the ruling would not affect either of its two acetic production plants in Hull.

A spokeswoman for BP said: "This is a historical matter. BP Chemicals was using the filters in just a tiny proportion of our acetate production streams many years ago. We have almost completely phased it out."

However, the patented filter is still being used in one of its two acetic acid plants, and is unlikely to be phased out until April. It has been ordered to pay Hoechst compensation for the full period until the filter is completely out of use.

The argument centres on a filter which purifies acetic acid by removing certain iodides, allowing the cheaper and faster production of vinyl acetate from acetic acids. Hoechst argues that if BP had not used the filter, which it calls a "guard bed", the company might not have been able to carve such a command of the market.

BP is playing down the importance of the filter, and says it would be disappointed if it had to pay its rival as much as \$25 million in compensation. The company hopes to limit its damages by arguing that the guard bed was employed as an extra in the production line.

Mr Justice Laddie told BP: "You are going to say that the guard bed is the tail and not the dog, and it will be crucial to your submission that you are right."

He indicated that Hoechst stood to gain more by taking the unusual step of claiming for the profits that BP made from the acid, rather than the well-trodden route of applying for damages.

Pearson sells holding in Hong Kong broadcaster

By ERIC REGULY

PEARSON, the media and entertainment group, dismantled the key component of its Asian strategy yesterday with the sale of its 10 per cent stake in Television Broadcasts, Hong Kong's leading broadcaster, for £111.1 million.

Pearson acquired the TVB interest only two years ago, paying £103.6 million. Greg Dyke, head of Pearson Television, said: "Our original plan was to use it to expand our investments in Asia."

TVB and Pearson made only a little progress together. Their biggest accomplishment was creating a satellite TV joint venture in India, called Home TV. The venture will not be affected by Pearson's withdrawal from TVB.

Pearson said it would pursue other opportunities in Asia, but did not provide details. The TVB stake was sold to Shaw Brothers, a cinema and entertainment group in Hong Kong which owns the world's largest library of Chinese films.

Shaw already owned 23.5 per cent of TVB. Pearson received £3.5 million in dividends over two years from the TVB investment, but they did not cover the cost of capital. The sale proceeds will help to cut debt.

The TVB sale appears to be part of Pearson's efforts to focus on the group, eliminating peripheral and non-control investments. Majorie Scardino, the new chief executive, is expected to announce a series of disposals over the next few years.

Analysts said they could include Pearson's remaining 43 per cent stake in BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster, the half stake in the Lazard investment house and perhaps some newsletters and magazines.

In the longer term, the City believes that Pearson may sell Pearson Television, which includes Thames TV, Select TV, Grampy and FT Television. Mr Dyke would not comment on speculation that he would like to purchase the division in a management buyout.

He said he had not discussed the idea with Ms Scardino. In a separate development, Pearson said it would provide more details about its investigation into Penguin's accounting on March 17, when its annual results are released.

BUSINESS TODAY

FTSE 100	4338.5	(-19.3)
FTSE All Share	2115.43	(-7.3)
Nikkei	19034.54	(-17.17)
New York	6912.76	(-16.82)
Dow Jones	801.67	(-1.13)

3-month Interbank	6.5%	(5.75%)
1-year long gilt	7.125%	(1.125%)

New York	1.6185	(1.6125)
London	1.6182	(1.6114)
DM	2.7252	(2.7226)
FR	3.2025	(3.1998)
SP	2.5728	(2.5681)
Yen	198.84	(198.52)
S Index	97.2	(97.2)

London	1.6330	(1.6283)
DM	3.7040	(3.6993)
FR	1.4715	(1.4708)
Yen	192.25	(192.25)
S Index	103.8	(103.8)

Tokyo close Yen	122.53
Barclays 15-day (May)	\$19.55 (\$19.50)
London close	\$353.75 (\$346.35)

* denotes midday trading price



Philippe Bourguignon, chairman and chief executive of Euro Disney who steered the company through its deep financial crisis, is leaving for a post at Club Med. Gilles Pelissou, president and CEO, will take on the role

Auditor pays ADT £50m to settle dispute

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

BDO Binder Hamlyn, the former accountancy partnership of Binder Hamlyn, has agreed to end a seven-year battle and pay nearly \$86 million (£50 million) in an out-of-court settlement with ADT, the American electronic security provider.

This is almost half the amount the firm was ordered to pay in damages to ADT by the High Court in December 1995 and thereby removes the threat of £34 million personal liability faced by 150 former partners.

The firm said the settlement, which consists of a \$77.5 million immediate payment, with \$8.6 million deferred, fell within its insurance cover. It has withdrawn an appeal scheduled for later this year.

John Newton, a Binder Hamlyn spokesman, expressed mixed feelings about the settlement but added: "The costs and uncertainty of the outcome of litigation have influenced us in taking this essentially commercial decision."

We firmly believe the original judgment was unsound and we are aware that there was considerable professional interest in following the progress of our appeal hearing. Nevertheless, this settlement removes uncertainty from our partners and draws a line under the financial and time costs of the case."

Shield soars despite statement

By JEREMY LAURANCE
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

SHARES in Shield Diagnostics leapt another £1.10 to £5.26 yesterday in spite of publication of a carefully worded statement intended to damp down speculation.

Shield, whose shares were 150p at the start of the month, is working on a test that could replace cholesterol screening. The statement included a letter from George Miller of the Medical Research Council Wolfson Centre of Preventive Medicine in London who is co-ordinating a trial of 15 different markers of heart disease.

One of these is APT, made by Shield, which was shown in a pilot study to hold some promise and this appeared to be confirmed by a preliminary analysis of results.

Shield's shares were 150p at the start of the month, is working on a test that could replace cholesterol screening. The statement included a letter from George Miller of the Medical Research Council Wolfson Centre of Preventive Medicine in London who is co-ordinating a trial of 15 different markers of heart disease.

Rabbatts resigns from Centrica

By ERIC REGULY

HEATHER RABBATTS, believed to be Britain's best paid town hall chief, yesterday resigned as non-executive director of Centrica, which emerged from British Gas earlier this week.

Ms Rabbatts, £115,000-a-year chief executive of Lambeth council, said: "It was a matter of personal regret that she had submitted her resignation."

Pressure from Tory and Liberal Democrat councillors, who said she should devote all of her time to fixing Lambeth's affairs, was behind her decision to resign. The Lambeth position she took two years ago is known as "the worst job in local government."

Ms Rabbatts, 41, a former barrister, argued that joining the Centrica board would not affect her commitment to Lambeth. In an effort to gain support, she even offered to donate her £20,000 a year Centrica salary to the mayor's charity.

Roy Gardner, Centrica's chief executive, recruited Ms Rabbatts to help repair Centrica's reputation for shoddy service. She was approached by Centrica in December and would have attended her first board meeting this week. Mr Gardner said: "I am very sorry that Ms Rabbatts has had to resign her post."

NatWest seeks £10m from Tesco

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

NATWEST is believed to be seeking up to £10 million compensation from Tesco after the supermarket group ditched a five-year contract with the bank and signed a new deal with Royal Bank of Scotland.

Last week Tesco said it was linking with RBS to provide financial services. NatWest had provided Tesco's Clubcard Plus debit card since last June.

Lord MacLaurin of Knebworth, Tesco chairman, resigned from the board of NatWest after the new deal with RBS was confirmed. David Malpas retired as managing director of Tesco yesterday after nearly 30 years with the company. He is succeeded by Terry Leahy, who becomes chief executive.

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Hanson votes for split

Hanson shareholders yesterday voted overwhelmingly for the demerger of Energy Group. Its shares will trade separately in London and New York from Monday.

The split will give shareholders one Energy share for every ten Hanson shares held. On the so-called grey market in London yesterday Energy shares fell 6½p to 520p.

Talks accord

Britain and America reported progress in talks over the past three days toward a new free-market "open skies" aviation agreement. A State Department negotiator said there was progress "toward an agreed text for a new bilateral accord".

Share placing

Bakyrchik Gold raised £7.1 million via a share placing in London yesterday. The new shares were placed at 200p each and represent about 9.9 per cent of existing capital. After the placing, Indochina Goldfields, a Canadian company, will own 27.9 per cent of Bakyrchik.

Stordata up

Stordata Solutions, the car security and data storage company, earned pre-tax profits of £1.5 million in the year to November 30, compared with losses of £473,000 in the previous year. Earnings were 1.25p a share (1.27p loss). A final dividend of 0.3p a share makes a total of 0.5p (nil).

Allied higher

Allied Leisure, the ten-pin bowling company, reported pre-tax profits of £1.4 million for the six months to December 31, up from £515,000 previously. Earnings rose to 1.07p a share from 0.63p. The interim dividend is 0.33p a share (nil). Ken Scobie, chairman, said trading "continues to be patchy." The shares fell 6p to 46p.



Nord Anglia Education, the education services provider whose chairman is Kevin McNeany, will be valued at £18 million when its shares begin trading on the stock market next week. Nord will raise £9.69 million via a share placing at 140p

Christian Salvesen rebels seek support in the City

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

DISSIDENT Christian Salvesen shareholders who oppose the demerger of the company's Aggreko equipment hire subsidiary, are seeking the support of institutional investors for their campaign against the board.

John Grant, formerly finance director of LucasVarity, who was recruited by the dissidents to lead their fight, will take the battle to the City next week, meeting institutions before a shareholders meeting on March 3.

Shareholders are to vote on a proposed special 34p foreign income dividend worth a total of £100 million. They have already been paid an enhanced dividend of £50 million. In the second half of the year, they will be asked to vote on spinning off Aggreko, the

equipment hire business. Salvesen's board, which last year turned down a bid approach by Hays, the logistics company, unveiled details of the proposed FID yesterday. It will be combined with a share consolidation to have the same effect as a share buyback.

The rebels, including Sir

Gerald Elliot, a former chairman and a member of the Salvesen family, want the proposal thrown out and to replace Chris Masters, the chief executive, with Mr Grant. Sir Gerald, who has a 2 per cent stake, claims to have the support of shareholders — all family members — with

about 10 per cent of the capital. The family controls 38 per cent of the group.

Mr Grant said the group should be able to deliver value through growth. "Just giving money back to shareholders is defeatist," he said.

Tempus, page 30

Ex-Swithland directors jailed

TWO former directors of a Leicestershire car dealership were yesterday sent to prison for a multimillion-pound fraud after a joint investigation by the Serious Fraud Office, Leicester fraud squad and Customs and Excise (Robert Miller writes).

John Hayes, founder and chairman of the Swithland Group, received a five-year sentence and was disqualified from acting as a company director for ten years.

David Sharratt, 51, Swithland finance director, received a three-and-a-half year sentence and was barred as a

company director for seven years. Sentencing at Oxford Crown Court, Judge Richard May said: "Those who loaned money in reliance on the figures you gave lost it all or a great deal of it. This strikes at the heart of the trust on which commerce must depend."

West Ham plans £50m flotation in the summer

By JASON NISSE

WEST HAM United, the struggling Premiership club, is to float in the summer with a market value of at least £50 million after raising £1.6 million in a private share placing yesterday.

Terence Brown, chairman, said the money will be used to complete the payments on the £8.5 million purchase of striker John Harrison and Paul Kinson. The club may raise more before it floats.

The executors of the estate of the late Matthew Harding are preparing to place part of their 25 per cent stake in Chelsea Village, owners of Chelsea, it emerged yesterday. The holding, which cost just £15 million, is now worth more than £60 million.

Chelsea recorded a pre-tax loss of £404,000 in the six months to 31 December. Loss per share was 0.27p. Despite spending £12.5 million on players in the period, and receiving only £6 million back, Chelsea's accounting allowed it to record a £31,000 profit on player trading.

The club said its fund raising to pay for the redevelopment of its ground at Stamford Bridge was nearly completed.

Chelsea has raised £26.3 million from share placings and has placed another nine million shares, which were yesterday priced at 161½p, up 6½p.

The consortium, led by Albert Scardino, husband of Pearson's chief executive, bidding for Nottingham Forest yesterday raised its offer to £19 million. This matches the bid by the group led by Nigel Foray, chairman of Burford, Forest shareholders will decide on the bids at an extraordinary meeting on Monday night.

Wimpsey Homes is buying Roker Park, the home of Sunderland Football Club since 1898, for £1.3 million. Sunderland move to a new 42,000-seat stadium in the summer.

GDP growth rate revised up to 2.7%

UK ECONOMIC growth in the fourth quarter of last year was yesterday confirmed at 0.8 per cent although minor revisions to back data lifted the year-on-year growth rate of gross domestic product to 2.7 per cent from the 2.6 per cent reported in provisional figures from the Office for National Statistics.

Non-oil GDP figures were unrevised, with growth of 0.7 per cent in the quarter and 2.5 per cent year on year. The figures show consumer spending remained the main engine for growth, rising 0.9 per cent in the quarter. Investment remained disappointing, with growth of only 0.2 per cent in the fourth quarter.

Hickson to reduce debt

HICKSON International, the speciality chemicals company that has spent a year in heavy restructuring, plans a major disposal aimed at reducing further its debt burden. Hickson reported a loss before tax of £9.2 million, which included a goodwill write-off following the sale of Hickson Mannro. Pre-tax profit before exceptional items was £7.8 million (£5.9 million) and underlying operating profit improved by £3 million to £14 million. Borrowings fell to £56 million from £82 million. Tempus, page 30

On track for ScotRail

THE Government's rail privatisation programme remained on track when a potential delay was averted in Scotland. The Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority voted unanimously to endorse the choice of National Express as preferred bidder for ScotRail. The authority, comprising 12 councils in western Scotland, is ScotRail's biggest single customer and stipulates timetables and services in its area. The endorsement follows three years of negotiations involving rail regulators.

UBS takes a loss

UBS, Switzerland's largest bank, had a loss of Sfr348 million (£145 million) in 1996 after a Sfr3 billion charge against bad debts and restructuring costs of Sfr120 million. In the previous year profits were Sfr1.67 billion. Personnel expenses last year rose by 17 per cent due "in large part to performance and profit-related bonuses," said the bank. The dividend is unchanged at Sfr32 a share. Mathis Caballavetta, chief executive, said UBS hoped for a net profit this year of more than Sfr2 billion. Tempus, page 30

Aer Rianta diversifies

THE threatened closure of duty-free shops within the EU by mid-1999 has prompted Aer Rianta, the state-owned airport authority in the Irish Republic, to join NavWest Ventures in a 40 per cent stake in Birmingham International Airport for £143 million. Aer Rianta is believed to have paid £13 million for a 25 per cent stake. The restructuring deal paves the way for a £260 million investment programme at the airport. Last year half of Aer Rianta's profits, around £18 million, was from duty-free shops.

Grafton profits build

STRONG growth in the Irish construction sector helped to lift pre-tax profits at Grafton, the building materials group based in Dublin, by 41 per cent to £15.5 million in 1996. Turnover rose 25 per cent to £192 million. Earnings rose 44 per cent to £82.7p a share. All Grafton's operations in the Republic recorded double-digit growth in turnover. In the UK, a string of small acquisitions during the year in England helped to lift turnover 50 per cent to £50 million. A final dividend of 11p a share lifts the total 40 per cent to 17.5p.

Shell joint venture slips

SHOWA SHELL SEKIYU, the Japanese oil refining company that is 50 per cent owned by Royal Dutch/Shell, suffered a 36.2 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to 12.18 billion yen in 1996. The company was adversely affected by poor retail prices for oil products and strong crude prices. In yen-based terms the price of Dubai crude, a Middle Eastern crude used as a benchmark in Asia, rose 41.4 per cent in 1996 because of strong crude prices and the yen's depreciation against the dollar.

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Capita uses placing to fund acquisitions

THE Capita Group, the outsourcing and professional support services provider, will become the UK's largest provider of pensions administration services after the acquisition of Hartshead Solway for a total of £4.75 million (Martin Barrow writes).

Hartshead's clients include more than 100 private and public sector clients. In the year to March 31, 1996, the company earned pre-tax profits of £544,000 on income of £6.6 million.

Capita is also buying the 50 per cent that it does not own of DriveSafe Services from JHP Group for an initial £10 million and up to £5 million related to profits. DriveSafe administers theory tests for learner drivers. Capita is raising £11.85 million through a tender placing of new shares at 60p each.

Tempus, page 30

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.18	2.02
Austria Sch	20.08	19.58
Belgium Fr	58.54	54.64
Canada \$	2.303	2.143
Cyprus Cyp	0.846	0.791
Denmark Kr	10.52	10.12
Finland Mk	8.70	8.05
France Fr	16.57	15.92
Germany Dm	2.87	2.68
Greece Dr	444	418
Hong Kong \$	12.13	12.13
Iceland Kr	120	100
Ireland P	1.08	1.00
Israel Sh	5.69	5.06
Italy Lire	2013	2038
Japan Yen	216.20	198.20
Malta	0.655	0.600
Netherlands Gld	3.197	2.957
New Zealand \$	2.47	2.25
Norway Kr	11.44	10.84
Portugal Esc	205.50	205.00
Spain Ptas	7.253	7.02
Sweden Kr	241.00	224.00
Switzerland Fr	2.50	2.32
Turkey Lira	205400	194400
USA \$	1.712	1.552

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

THE SUNDAY TIMES Great train robbery?

After another set of rail managers collected massive windfall profits, and commuters faced train cancellations, rail privatisation was plunged into fresh political controversy. Was this the greatest rail robbery of all time...?

Business — The Sunday Times tomorrow

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A WORKING WEEK FOR: RICHARD GOODING

Airport chief takes off in the land of dragons

Jon Ashworth finds out how a white elephant came to fly and how an underground link is expected to help it to soar

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LONDON City airport is heading for smoother skies. New ownership has brought a touch of calm to this bleak outpost in London's Docklands. More than a million passengers will pass through its gates this year, and the best is yet to come. The opening of the Jubilee Line extension will, it is claimed, place London City just 18 minutes' ride from Westminster.

All this provides the perfect cue for Richard Gooding, who joined as managing director in August with a brief to steer London City through its new phase. He is set to embark on a programme of refurbishment that will transform the entire package. The terminal building and lounges will be spruced up and the car park resurfaced. There are plans to link the terminal with a 200-bed, four-star hotel, allowing businessmen to check out and board their flights with a minimum of fuss.

The changes bear the mark of Dermot Desmond, a Dublin businessman who is fast building a diverse portfolio of investments. His interests include Celtic Football Club, aircraft leasing, property and hotels. He purchased Sandy Lane in Barbados for £38 million last year. Desmond paid £23.5 million for London City in October 1995, ending a disastrous run for John Mowlem, the construction group that built the airport.

London City opened in 1987, just before the collapse in property values that was to push Canary Wharf over the brink. Mowlem could only watch in horror as millions of pounds seeped away into the Docklands marshes. The jinx extended to airlines such as City Link, which pulled out in 1991 after running up a reputed £10 million in costs. Another carrier, Brynmor, withdrew in 1993, and Coni-Flug went one better — it went bust.

The turning point came in early 1992, when London City's runway was extended to accommodate aircraft such as the BAe 146 "whisper jet", which has a range of 1,000 miles, bringing most leading European destinations within reach. By the end of the year, passenger numbers had risen from a low of 150,000 to about 185,000. The opening of the Limehouse Link significantly improved access to the City and central London.

Desmond, who passes through London City at least once a week, has brought the financial stability that the airport needs. Gooding says: "He's not an asset stripper. He's not that sort of investor at all. He is interested in businesses where he can come in at a good value-for-money price, and grow and enhance those businesses so that they become more valuable."

Desmond has timed his entry well. The airport will soon have a raft of new neighbours; among them Norton Healthcare, a US company that is building its European regional headquarters on the far side of the runway. A new business park is being launched, and there are plans — as yet unfinalised — to open London's biggest exhibition and conference centre. Wimpey Homes is building 777 homes around the Royal Docks. Deloitte & Touche is assessing the feasibility of building a £90 million national aquarium.

Such developments can only spur pas-

senger numbers, which hit 727,601 in 1996 and should comfortably exceed a million this year. Problems of access have been the main obstacle in the past — highlighted by controversial claims that the airport was only 20 minutes by car from the West End. After complaints the boast was amended to "less than 30 minutes".

Many continue to view Docklands as an impenetrable wasteland. As Gooding says: "A lot of people in London think that east of Tower Bridge it says 'There Be Dragons' on the map. It's seen as a lot of derelict warehouses, lots of narrow cobbled streets, and the legacy of some of the more famous criminals that operated in the area."

The opening of the Jubilee Line extension, scheduled for March 1998, is expected to make all the difference. Gooding says: "Westminster will be 18 minutes away. You'll be able to travel door-to-door between here and the Ritz in under 30 minutes. Suddenly, we're going to be nearer than any other airport." Shuttle buses will cover the half mile between the airport and Canning Town station.

Gooding is well suited to this type of project. He joined from London Luton airport, which was turned round under his stewardship. In his five years there, Luton branched out from cheap holiday charter flights to include budget European services, using airlines such as Debonair. The airport grew into a

6 In some ways, that congestion factor at Heathrow is our biggest strength

popular port of call for executive jets, attracted by the ability to fly in at any time of day or night.

Gooding is now training his sights on a more elusive quarry — the upmarket, time-conscious, business traveller. The intention is to increase the number of destinations — currently 20, served by 13 airlines — to take in all the leading business centres in Europe. Places such as Amsterdam, Bern, Frankfurt, Dublin, Stockholm and Milan currently fall within the net, served by carriers such as Air UK and CityJet. Those still to be snared include Copenhagen, Hamburg, Madrid and Barcelona. UK destinations yet to be served include Glasgow, Manchester and Belfast.

London City is becoming a viable alternative to Heathrow for executives within the appropriate catchment area. Those who live in central London, and around the eastern side of the M25, will find it appropriate to their needs. It certainly has the edge on Heathrow in swiftness of service. Passengers can turn up ten minutes before departure, and speed on their way, fog and other natural hazards permitting. As Gooding says: "At Heathrow, you can walk for 20 minutes before you've even got into the main terminal, never mind the traumas of parking."

"Heathrow is a super airport, because it

has such a choice of flights and such high frequencies. All the airlines in the world want to be there, and it's natural that passengers will want to be where most of the well-known airlines are. But I think it is getting too-like. In some ways, that congestion factor at Heathrow is our biggest strength."

In many ways, Gooding's goals are not particularly ambitious. London City deals with 20,000 passengers a week; doubling the numbers would threaten congestion and delays — all the things it is seeking to avoid. Only about 15 per cent of air travellers in London and the South East fall into the premium traveller bracket. Gooding will be happy to capture about 1½ per cent of that. As he says: "The aviation business isn't just about volume of passengers. It's about yield: how much can you earn from each of these passengers?"

The refurbishment is an important part of the equation. "Much of people's perceptions of the business are of what it looks like. Is it clean and tidy? Does it look bright and polished? Or is it starting to look slightly tarnished? These make a real impression on people." The terminal and lounges are a prime focus. "The airport building is now ten years old. You're starting to see the cracks."

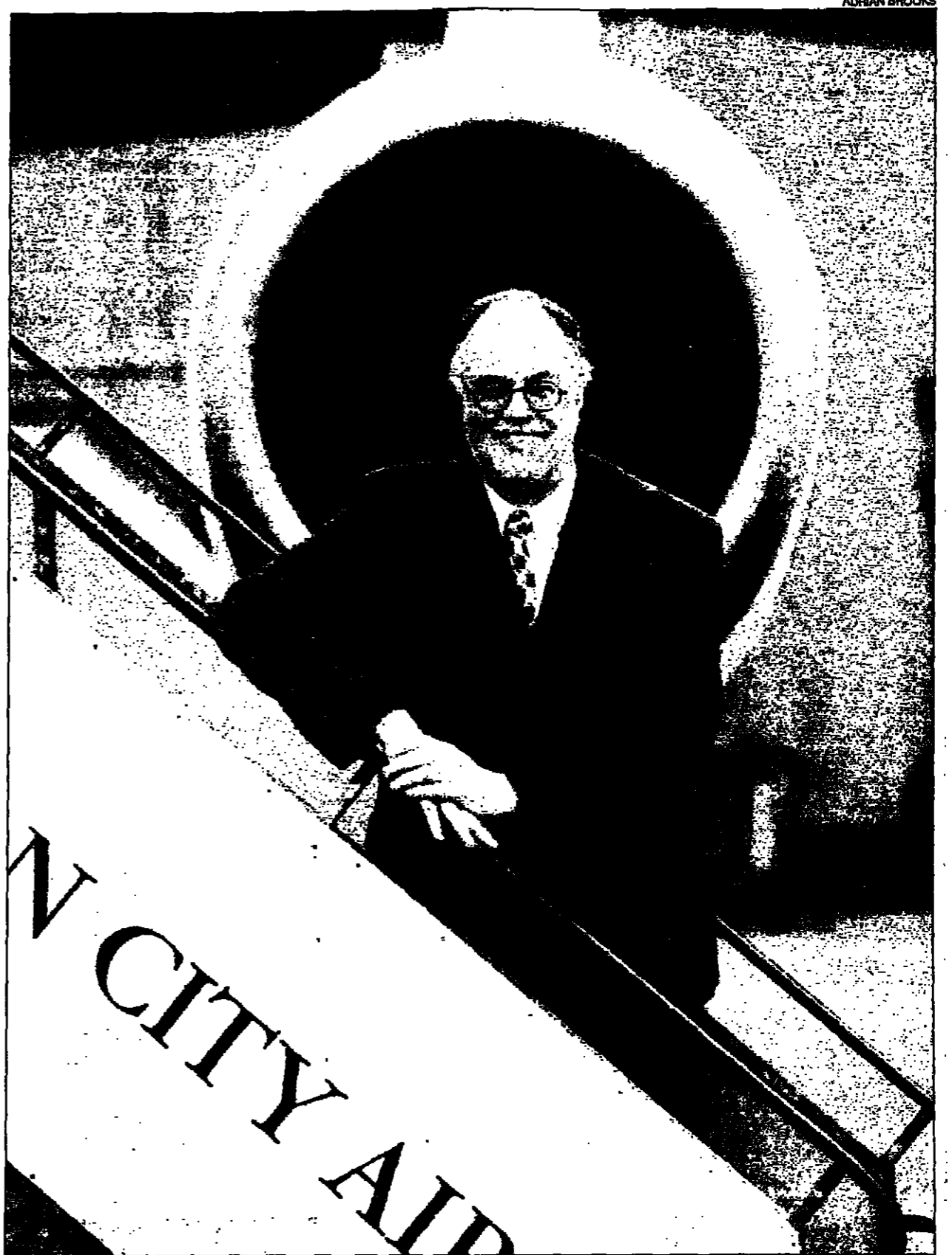
Gooding is keen to smarten up the airport car park, putting in a covered walkway and improving security. Most of the interest is likely to centre on the hotel scheme — a rare enough spectacle in amenity-starved Docklands. He foresees a complex that will blend in with the terminal and straddle the airport drop-off zone. "A lot of people like to use the facilities of a hotel, if even for a few hours. You could check out of the hotel and check in for your flight all in the same transaction. You just walk through and get on to the aeroplane."

Having Desmond on the scene has helped to make such initiatives possible. "While we're not hugely profitable, we're no longer losing the disgusting sums of money that were being lost in earlier years. We can start to turn our eyes to the sort of issues which would have been seen as bit more frivolous in years before."

The promise of increased jobs can only go down well in a borough with higher than average unemployment. London City provides work for 600 people, subcontractors and other staff included. "Ten years ago, here in the Royal Docks, not one of those jobs existed. There's never been a penny of public money in the airport, yet from nothing, 600 well-paid permanent jobs have been created. In terms of economic regeneration, it's something we have to be proud of."

"While we need highly skilled jobs at one end of the spectrum, we also want cooks, and gardeners, and waiters, and waitresses, and retail people, and baggage handlers and firemen. The whole panoply of what used to be called working-class jobs. That's what airports are good at providing."

It all bodes well. "Having gone from a small, quiet, backwater airport which was seen by many as a white elephant, the original rationale behind developing an inner-city airport in London's Docklands has come to fruition. We're now being seen by the experienced business traveller as a genuine alternative to Heathrow for short-haul flights to and from Europe."



Richard Gooding says London City airport is not yet hugely profitable, but it is no longer losing "disgusting sums"

MARTIN CURRIE

A dram of comfort in an exotic environment

Joanna Pitman discovers the Victorian garden at the Glen Grant distillery

Beside the clear waters of the Back Burn, and carefully hidden in a leafy corner, is a turf-roofed Dram Hut and whisky safe. The Victorian garden attached to the Glen Grant distillery at Rothes on Spey, Aberdeenshire, has just been restored from bedraggled wilderness to idealised Scottish Highland landscape by its owners, the Chivas and Glenlivet Group.

The garden was designed by Major James Grant when he inherited the Glen Grant Pure Malt Scotch Whisky business in 1872. Its restoration has been shortlisted for this year's Civic Trust Landscape Award.

And whisky lovers will be tantalised by the reports of a rediscovery of the Dram Hut, Major Grant's private whisky safe that held stocks of the best pure malt. This has been re-equipped and made ready, one imagines, for directors of the group to indulge in a liquid equivalent of the Easter egg hunt. (Hints on its location may be divulged on special request.)

The garden restoration, carried out by a team of specialists led by Karen Ellington and with advice from the Scottish Conservation Projects Trust, has also provided a fascinating picture of Scottish horticultural history.

Major Grant was a pioneering businessman, a renowned sportsman and an intrepid traveller who undertook every project on a grand scale. He chose the 27-acre site taking advantage of the

landscape's natural features and dramatic setting and created rustic bridges across the burn and waterside paths to meander through the orchards and wooded glades.

An army of gardeners cleared the lower reaches of the glen and laid stone and pottery drains. Conservatories were built to house his collection of orchids and hothouse fruits. Special visitors were treated to melons, peaches and grapes before enjoying a glass of Glen

Grant from the safe with cold water from the burn.

In its heyday the garden fully employed 11 gardeners, but after Major Grant's death, it fell into decline. Harsh winters and the storm of 1953 took their toll.

The restorers spent three full seasons bringing the garden back to life with the help of a few photographs from the turn of the century. They traced the original winding pathways, removed fallen timber, seeded trees, rebuilt walls, restored

bridges and repaired ponds and pathways. And as they cleared the encroaching undergrowth, beautiful mature orchards were discovered in which most of the cherry and apple trees had survived.

Banks of rhododendrons and native ferns had also survived as well as specimens of early hybrids. The ornamental areas have been replanted with species from America, China and the Himalayas according to period garden catalogues. And the water features, a passion of Victorian gardeners, have been revived, the lily pond being refilled using the traditional method of clay puddling and the bog garden replanted with iris and lilac on its banks.

Exotic plants from distant parts were highly fashionable in the late 19th century and determined specimen collectors developed special cases to carry back samples.

Major Grant created garden environments to accommodate a wide variety of exotics, including a large rhubarb-like marshland plant from Brazil, samples of Himalayan birch and the Chinese primula.

The restoration of the Glen Grant garden to its idealised Highland landscape has provided an extraordinary living museum of Scotland's late 19th-century gardening heritage. And visitors will no doubt appreciate its year-round glories all the more if they are fortunate enough to discover the hidden Dram



Wilderness tamed: the restored garden of James Grant



A red rag to a bull market?

The Chinese flag will soon replace the Union Jack in Hong Kong. But what will happen to the economic complexion of the colony? How will companies fare after the change-over? Will investors be seeing red? Martin Currie think not.

After all, Hong Kong companies have been investing in China for many years. And Chinese companies — the 'red chips' — are already listed on the Hong Kong stock exchange.

But whatever happens — in South East Asia or elsewhere in the world — you can be sure that Martin Currie will be applying their long-established international investment skills to full advantage. (So no change there.)

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Increase your wealth with a clear conscience

THE TIMES: PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Shock waves of strong sterling

Caroline Merrell looks at the rising pound's profound effect on all aspects of the economy

For the person in the street, the only obvious effect of a sharp rise in the strength of sterling against other currencies is that holidays suddenly become much cheaper.

However, the pound's rise over the last few months will have a profound effect on all aspects of the economy, from the price of mortgages to the cost of sugar. It will also have a big impact on investments, savings, fixed-interest securities such as gilts, and company profits.

As the company reporting season begins, some, such as Reuters, the communications group, are already blaming disappointing figures on sterling's strength. Volkswagen, the German carmaker, gave warning last week that it would cease to buy British car components if they continued to get more expensive because of sterling's inexorable rise. Here *The Times* explains what the long-term impact of the strong pound will be.

Interest rates. The base rate in the UK is one of the highest among the developed nations. Foreign investors, such as the Americans, Japanese and continental Europeans, have rushed to invest in sterling. The situation is unlikely to change because these countries do not appear likely to increase rates enough to attract back investors.

Despite pressure from the Bank of England, Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, is refusing to raise the UK base rate. However, many economists, including Chris Turner at BZW, believe that interest rates will have to go up to try

to ease inflationary pressures. Mr Turner said: "We are still looking for three increases in base rates, bringing the total rise before the end of the year to 0.75 or 1 per cent."

Rises in the base rate will be matched by rises in mortgage rates and savings rates. A rise in interest rates means that foreigners will be more likely to continue to invest in sterling, thus keeping the pound strong.

Inflation. At the moment, the Government is trying to hit its inflation target of 2.5 per cent, without increasing interest rates. A strong pound is deemed to be a deflationary factor. Last year an estimated £178 billion was spent on imports. This same sum of money could buy many more imports this year, which means that the price of goods may not rise.

Company profits. These are almost certainly going to be hit by the rise in the pound. Nearly half of the profits earned by the biggest 100 companies in the UK are earned from abroad. These stated profits will be damaged by a strong pound.

However, John Hatherly,

M&G head of research, said: "The problems caused by the translation of overseas profits into sterling may be matched by companies borrowing overseas and paying off the interest in pounds."

UK manufacturers. The biggest victims of the rising pound will be UK manufacturing companies, many of which rely on export sales for a large part of their profits. Their goods will now be more expensive than many of their competitors' goods.

The damage will be slightly mitigated by the fact that UK companies will have to pay less for their raw materials. However, Mr Hatherly said: "Manufacturing companies in Germany did well despite the rise of the mark against the other currencies... German companies managed to become very much more efficient. In the UK, manufacturers will have to go through a period of painful adjustment."

Unit and investment trusts. At the end of last year many of the returns made on rising world markets by those with internationally invested unit trusts, personal equity plans

and investment trusts were wiped out by the currency movements.

Mr Hatherly said: "Many fund managers have in the past relied on a devaluing pound to boost returns from overseas investments. They will now have to pay much more attention to the underlying stock." Mr Hatherly said he advised investors who were concerned about currency risk to keep their investments restricted to the UK.

Gilt-edged stocks. Some investment managers believe that gilts are a particularly good buy at the moment. Ten-year gilts currently yield around 7.1 per cent, more than 1 per cent higher than the German equivalent. Foreign investors may be attracted by the yield and the fact that any income earned will be in sterling, which is appreciating in value.

More buyers will push up the price and the overall returns. Investments that rely on gilts include National Savings products and some fixed-interest unit trusts.

Holidays. One of the most appealing factors about the pound's rise is that holidays will be cheaper. According to American Express, £1 bought 7.53 francs a year ago. Now £1 buys 9.06 francs — a difference of nearly 20 per cent. Holiday-makers to Spain were given 187 pesetas for each pound exchanged, today they will receive 229 pesetas — 22 per cent more. However, those holidaying in the US now get \$1.57 to the pound, compared with \$1.49 a year ago — a 5 per cent difference.

WEEKEND MONEY is edited by Anne Ashworth

Halifax unmoved by campaign

The Halifax Building Society is refusing to bow to pressure from MPs and consumer bodies to compensate elderly, widowed and disabled members who have been excluded from the share distribution because their accounts are run by trustees.

As the society's 8.5 million members prepare to vote at Monday's special general meeting on the plans to become a bank, pressure is growing for the society to use the occasion to commit itself to paying free shares directly to disabled members and others

whose savings are handled by trustees. *The Times* has been campaigning against societies that refuse to give free shares to such members in their own right. Societies argue that only the first named on the account is a member and that members can receive only one payout each.

This excludes thousands of disabled and elderly people who are unable to handle their financial affairs and whose accounts are held in the name of relatives, friends or professionals acting as trustees.

Douglas French, MP,

sponsor of a Private Member's Bill which would force societies to include such disenfranchised people in their payout schemes, this week called on the Halifax to use Monday's meeting to make a "significant gesture and promise to come forward with a formula to recognise the interests of people being left out".

Mr French's Bill received an unopposed first reading in the Lords last Monday and will receive its second reading next Friday. If the Bill goes through unopposed, it could receive

Royal Assent in early March. As it stands, the Bill is not retrospective. The Halifax and other societies, including the Woolwich and the Alliance & Leicester, would not be forced to include trustee-held accounts in bonus payouts.

However, Mr French believes the societies have an "enormous moral obligation" to do so. He said: "The Halifax has an untenable position to say its scheme is fair. It is clear what the wishes of Parliament and public are."

SARA MCCONNELL

Banks build the bottom line

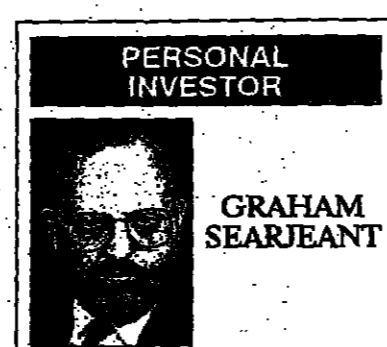
Traditionally, a pound managed by a great British bank was reckoned to be worth a fair bit less than the pound in your pocket. The skills of your friendly local bank manager devalued the assets he ran. Whereas most companies were valued by the stock market at more than their balance sheet worth, banks were priced at a discount.

There was, it turned out, a sound reason. In the 1970s and 1980s, banks showed an uncanny knack for losing money in large quantities. The more dynamic they became, the more spectacular the disasters for shareholders.

Few creatures are more dynamic than a lemming in full cry. Almost as one, banks successively rushed to lend on property, which crashed, to developing countries, which defaulted, on American oil and property, which dried, for small business expansion, which shrank rapidly in the 1990 slump, and for big developments that ran into trouble.

Profitable business was forever undermined by sometimes huge provisions against bad debts. Even some of their hefty dividends, the main solace for investors, were slashed. Midland, one of the worst hit, was finally taken over by Far East champion HSBC, to City relief. Banks were a laughing stock.

Not any more. For a while, banks have been disaster-free and underlying profits have grown apace. Bank shares have been the darlings of the market, leading and outpacing the market averages. Over the past five years, the FT-SE retail bank index has soared by nearly 300 per cent, against about 75 per cent for the all-share index. Powered



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more by profits than retreating, bank shares now typically trade at two to three times book value.

Can it last? It is hard to believe banks have given up old habits. But there are signs of fundamental change. Sir Brian Pitman, whose dedication to shareholder value paid big dividends at Lloyds, inspired a new generation of unselfish bottom-line bank bosses. They drive to cut costs and cut again, to match low-cost building societies and Abbey National, which has made a successful transition to banking. Telephones, computers and cash machines enabled this cost revolution and bring new products.

If small customers quit in fury when they find their branch has closed, their bank manager has been fired along with the staff, or been replaced by a youthful salesman, and they can only communicate with a faulty computer with no memory, then too bad. New customers can be bought and the cost of servicing them cut in turn. It seems to work. Top

British banks are now among the world's most profitable.

Clearing banks' cost ratios are still high, allowing for their broader mix of business; NatWest is now wielding the sabre on staff and branches. Expansion focuses on areas such as consumer credit, mortgages and fund management, historically safer than ambitious foreign ventures. Banks have infiltrated potential competition from telephone banking and credit cards and will partake in the supermarket challenge.

There is also a new caution. Barclays, which used to have to run to shareholders for more gambling money, now passes surplus capital back to shareholders rather than feeling compelled to lend it on any plausible passing proposition. Best of all, the UK economy that banks operate in has become quieter: steadier interest rates, steadier price levels and therefore less instability in the markets on which borrowers rely. If this continues, banks have a chance of staying on the straight and narrow.

Things can still go wrong. High profits invite competition, not least from converting building societies. Credit quality will deteriorate. Profit-taking on the Barclays results shows that a long bull market creates its own risks. The sector, though still not highly rated, is vulnerable to a market break. Soon, however, millions of people will become investors in new banks with new potential such as Halifax, Woolwich and Alliance & Leicester. They should not be in a hurry to sell. These now look the best way into the sector.

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Better deals emerge to encourage loyalty, says Caroline Merrell

A little extra incentive for Halifax borrowers

The Halifax, the United Kingdom's biggest lender with 19 per cent of the mortgage market, this week launched two schemes aimed at keeping its customers loyal.

The first initiative cuts more than 1 per cent off its range of fixed-rate loans, while the second offers a cashback of up to £10,000 spread over three years. The Halifax is now offering a five-year fixed-rate loan, with an interest rate set at 7.65 per cent. Previously the rate was 8.45 per cent. Its three-year fixed rates have a rate of 6.9 per cent, against 7.35 per cent previously, while its two-year fixed rate is 6.45 per cent, against 7.25 per cent.

The Christmas cashback scheme will pay borrowers a sum equal to 1 per cent of the outstanding loan, on December 1, for three years. Borrowers will also get a 1 per cent cashback when they take out the mortgage.

This aggressive move is seen by some as an attempt by the Halifax to maintain market share. Its 2.1 million borrowers have been effectively locked in since it announced in 1994 that it planned to merge with the Leeds and Bradford stock market. Borrowers have been unable to move their loans — doing so would jeopardise their allocation of shares, expected to be worth around £840.

Elsewhere, mortgage brokers are reporting an increase in business as three to four years of pent-up demand for property is released. Brokers are claiming an increase in demand for



Years of pent-up demand for property is being released

100 per cent mortgages despite the problems experienced by those buying houses without a deposit at the end of the Eighties. It was

this category of borrowers that experienced the greatest difficulty during the recession.

However, those in the mortgage market consider that lenders to these borrowers have learnt how to underwrite the loans with a little more care. Ian Darby, marketing director at John Charcol, the mortgage broker, said: "In reality, underwriting a 100 per cent loan is very similar to underwriting a 90 to 95 per cent loan."

He said it was easier for those with no deposit to try to borrow the entire value of their property, rather than using credit cards and personal loans to fund a deposit. He said: "Borrowing at 7.24

per cent or the average mortgage rate is much better than trying to take out a bank loan where the rates will be much higher."

Mr Darby said that he was also experiencing a rise in demand for fixed-rate loans. Of the Halifax move, he said: "I reckon the Halifax needed to cut their fixed rates because they were way out of line with the market."

Potential borrowers are being drawn to fixed-rate loans because of the security they provide. Many brokers believe that interest rates are almost sure to rise despite Kenneth Clarke's refusal to cave in to pressure from the Bank of England. Among the fixed rates recommended by John Charcol is a five-year 7.45 per cent rate from the Leeds & Holbeck, and a two-year 5.29 per cent mortgage from the Skipton.

Mr Darby and other mortgage brokers gave warning that borrowers should make sure that they understand the redemption penalties that apply to fixed-rate loans.

David Duncan, director of residential mortgages at Chase de Vere, said: "I would ask anyone planning to take out a fixed rate to make sure that they understand the redemption penalties. Many lenders are now expressing redemption penalties as a percentage of the loan rather than as a few months' interest."

Expressing penalties as a percentage of the loan could lead some borrowers into believing that they face paying less if they redeem their loan than they would in schemes where redemptions are expressed in terms of monthly interest.

Mr Darby also gave warning against some of the deeply discounted mortgages which were in vogue a few months ago — mortgages as low as 1 per cent were being offered.

One of the conditions of many discounted loans is that the borrower must move to the discount ends, which in some cases could double the mortgage payments overnight.

Best buys, page 42

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Beware the supermarket loss leader

Sainsbury's. Even its name sounds downbeat, as tired as its stores. In the dreary aisles and the populous queues of my local branch, I seldom feel more like singing the blues.

The supermarket is now hoping to regain its place in the nation's affections by diversifying into banking. The move suggests that Sainsbury's may, after all, be capable of copying the successful innovations of others.

As Delia Smith could tell you, there is much to be gained by following a tried and tested recipe. The highly efficient First Direct, created by the Midland, has obviously served as one model for the Sainsbury's bank. Sainsbury's has begun well by offering a highly competitive 5.75 per cent rate on balances of as little as £1. Small savers could earn a better return only by taking a risk with their money. These customers have largely



ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance Editor

been forgotten by the building societies who prefer investors with larger sums. Anyone now aspiring to open an account with £100 is seen only as a speculator, hoping to benefit from a future conversion.

The generous interest rate should also ensure that Sainsbury's wins a significant number of new savers when Halifax and the other societies becoming banks distribute their windfalls in the summer.

Savers who have been locked into low-paying accounts will be anxious

to find a new home for their cash. The Abbey National has already declared its intention to win as much of this money as possible. Another rival should act in the most satisfactory way to increase rates all round.

Customers, however, should not be overwhelmed by Sainsbury's generosity. Its savings account is a loss leader. If you sign up with the supermarket, it may attempt to encourage you to fill your trolley with other financial products but you would be best advised to shop around.

Beyond belief

BOWING to demands for information from its 1.1 million policyholders, Scottish Amicable this week said it will name its chosen bidder in March. However, the situation remains far from satisfactory. The with-profit policyholders who own Scottish Amicable will have no chance to compare the eight rival offers from Abbey National, the Prudential and others.

The Scottish Amicable board will be guided in its decision by SBC Warburg and the other advisers who a few weeks ago recommended the company's flawed plan for its future. This was presented as "a real opportunity to maximise value for with-profit policyholders", although it richly rewarded directors and gave the policyholders a paltry sum. How will anyone have any faith in their opinion?

A proposal to buy insurance to ring-fence assets is expected, says Marianne Curphey

A new look at long-term care

Tens of thousands of elderly people who could need nursing home care in the final years of their lives will learn within weeks how the Government expects them to pay for it.

Although the long-awaited draft Bill on long-term care is due to be published soon, there will be a consultation period for insurers and charities, and ministers admit it is unlikely to become law before the general election.

That leaves many about to enter private nursing homes confused and anxious. It also means that those who are ill and may need nursing be-

tween now and the summer face a dilemma.

The draft Bill is expected to propose a partnership scheme whereby an individual may buy an insurance policy to ring-fence their assets and prevent a proportion of them being used to pay for care.

The working details have not yet been released, but they are expected to suggest that for every £1 worth of insurance taken out, the Government will "disregard" between £1.50 and £2 of assets.

In Britain, single pensioners with assets of between £10,000 and £16,000 now have to contribute towards a propor-

tion of the cost of nursing care, while those with more than £16,000, including their homes, have to meet the full bill. These regulations have been criticised for penalising pensioners who save.

Under new proposals expected, if a person bought insurance worth £40,000, then, together with the £16,000 "disregarded", for single pensioners, the State would allow assets worth between £56,000 and £96,000 to be left free for inheritance, before it claimed any surplus to cover long-term care costs.

Age Concern England said that it was concerned that the

proposals would benefit a very small number of people who could afford to pay for such insurance. "We would like to see all political parties making a commitment to providing free nursing care to everyone."

The Continuing Care Conference, which represents charities, care providers, local authorities, financial product providers and consumer organisations, called on all the political parties to give the issue top priority during the election campaign.

It says it is concerned that none of the parties has presented comprehensive proposals that deal with the long-

term and the immediate problems facing large numbers of older people. About 160,000 older people go into nursing or residential homes each year and 40,000 people are forced to sell their homes to meet long-term care costs.

Frank Field, Labour MP and chairman of the Social Security Select Committee, proposes that people should buy insurance to cover the risk of needing professional care at the end of their lives. Everyone would pay 3 per cent of their income towards this, and payments would be triggered when the person qualified for help for medical reasons.



Fears over the cost of care mean only the likes of Joe in Cocoon face a free-wheeling future

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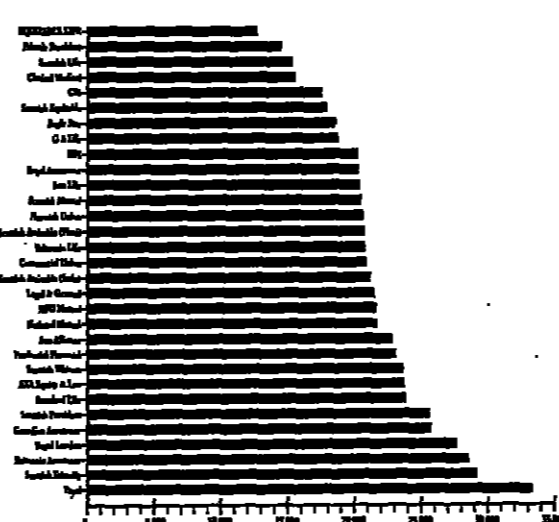
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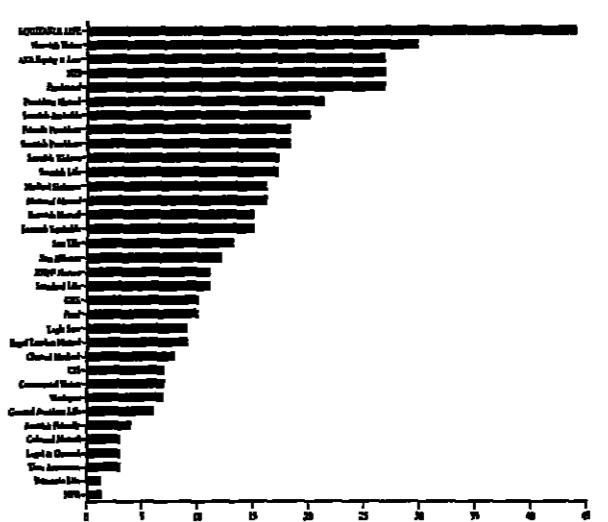
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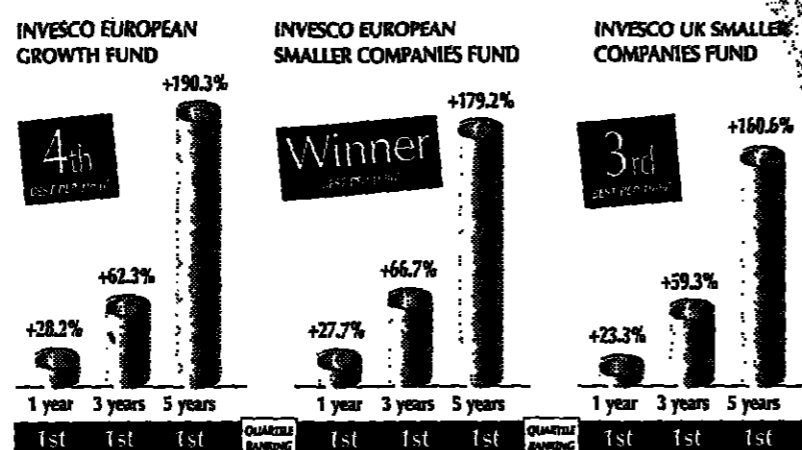
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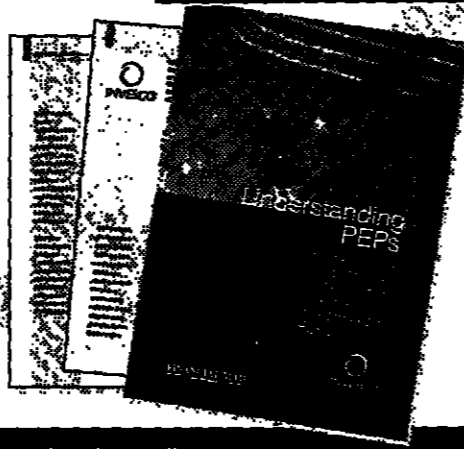


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Homeowners caught by development plans

Property blight is affecting more and more people, reports

Sara McConnell



Doomed: Catherine Lane in the grounds of her home, Hill House, a Grade II listed property that will be demolished to make way for the second runway at Manchester airport

Homeowners near the path of the proposed second runway at Manchester airport this week vowed to fight on against the expansion, which they say has blighted their properties for the past six years and trapped them in homes which they cannot sell.

In some cases, the value of homes has dropped by more than half, they claim. Hundreds of thousands of homeowners across the country are similarly affected by road schemes, rail routes and other big public projects involving environmental upheaval for years or even decades. Even those who qualify for compensation face years of waiting with no prospect of claiming until a scheme has been up and running for a year.

The rules governing compensation were last year attacked as inadequate by the Select Committee on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. A government working group is reviewing payments to homeowners and is expected to report "shortfalls" in compensation for either their financial loss or the misery they will inevitably suffer.

Campaigners against the second runway at Manchester airport this week started a legal challenge to the Government's decision last month to approve the plans after an eight-month

group of Collyer-Bristow, a firm of solicitors, said: "This review is years overdue. For too long homeowners who find themselves in the locality of a popular scheme have had no alternative but to brace themselves for years of uncertainty with no guarantee of adequate compensation for either their financial loss or the misery they will inevitably suffer."

Campaigners against the second runway at Manchester airport this week started a legal challenge to the Government's decision last month to approve the plans after an eight-month

public inquiry. Barry Hepburn, co-ordinator of the Manchester Airport Joint Action Group, is leading the challenge. He said the group was "battered up to fight on". Some homeowners had seen the value of their homes drop by more than £100,000. He said: "People close to the second runway are finding their homes virtually unsaleable."

However, a successful challenge would mean further uncertainty, particularly for the residents of the worst-affected areas, which include Moberley and Knutsford. Rick Dallimore, a partner in Moberley and Knutsford estate agents, said: "The new runway will end in the centre of Moberley, which is causing problems. We have houses for sale which don't sell, or at least not at an acceptable price. The airport has bought a lot of properties off people, but we are left with the people whose homes adjoin the runway."

One Moberley resident, Martin Bridgford, has been trying to sell his five-bedroom cottage for four-and-a-half years. It went on the market for £335,000 in June 1992. Now it is worth an estimated £100,000 less because of the runway plans, according to his estate agent. Almost all

prospective buyers say they do not want to buy because of the airport. Last month one buyer's surveyor concluded: "It is difficult to see why anyone should want to buy this house because of the airport situation."

Other residents who spoke to *The Times* refused to be named in case they jeopardised any slim chance of a sale. One has been trying to sell his four-bedroom detached house since 1991.

He and his wife want to move to a smaller, more manageable house. The couple estimate the house is worth about £400,000, but one buyer offered £140,000. They said: "It's a basic right that people need to move. We're almost in despair. All our lives we've had reasonable control over what happens. Now we have none."

Mr Bridgford is angry that Manchester airport has so far refused to exercise its discretionary powers to buy blighted property. The airport said in a statement: "The second runway development will be managed to keep disturbance in the locality to a minimum. After the second runway is operational, the airport company will honour its legal obligations in respect of proper claims for compensation."

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Martin Waller concludes his five-part series on investing

Bid battles explained

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE STOCK MARKET



You are nearly there. There are just a few odd points you need to know, starting with what happens when one company bids for another.

Takeover bids

Our lives are crisscrossed with decisions. Some we take immediately, others we have a few days to mull over. Few of us have two whole months to decide even the most serious.

Peculiarly, this is how long you get to decide whether or not to sell your shares to a company that may want to buy them. The mechanics of the bid are thus: Company A says it wants to buy company B. It names a price it is prepared to pay for each share — generally well above that share's previous price, unless the bid is widely expected.

The offer may be straight cash, a mixture of cash and new shares or loans to be issued by company A. Another type of offer, although rare, is one entirely of new shares. If the offer includes shares, there will generally be a full cash alternative pitched slightly below the value of the share offer.

If you have shares in company B, you must decide if the offer

fully values them. Consult a financial adviser or the press, and remember the first rule: never hurry. If the offer is agreed by company A immediately, a joint announcement is made that a deal has been done.

If it is contested, the board of company B will generally advise its shareholders to take no action. Follow this advice: most contested bids have to be raised to be successful, and first offers are often just sighting shots. But if you accept the first offer and it is later raised, you get the higher amount anyway.

Once a formal document is issued, the takeover has 60 days to be resolved. Although most companies' shares are owned by big City institutions, small shareholders are of some importance. The bidder must gain the assent of more than 50 per cent of the shares issued. Bids have been won or lost by just a few thousand shares. The offer document will tell you how to accept. You will then receive circulars from both sides. Company B's record is "seriously flawed", company A could run company B better, and so on — a quick read and bin most of it.

If you fail to accept and the bid succeeds, obviously you get the price on offer. If a majority accept, it is always best to go along with them. Conversely, you do not get the money if the bid fails, even if you have accepted it. If it fails, expect the share price, which will have risen to approach the terms on offer, to crash back again.

The players

City operators today may be conglomerates, huge financial institutions that might house merchant banks advising companies on finance and City business, such as takeovers and broking businesses that buy



Beware the City is not without its Arthur Daley characters

and sell shares. They may also own fund managers that hold them long-term, although most are independent and skilled at playing off banks and brokers against each other.

Whatever the structure, they are supposed to operate separately. If a merchant bank learns that its client, company A, is to bid for company B tomorrow and the shares can be expected to rise, it is clearly unacceptable for a banker to tell the brokers to buy the shares now. The two businesses are under one roof, but are said to be separated by a Chinese Wall.

I said "supposed". Actions such as the purchase I just described are not unknown, and are an example of insider trading and illegal, as would be the purchase of shares in company B by a company A employee who knew about the bid beforehand. But all this does happen — it is not unusual for shares in a company to rocket before a bid is announced. Clearly, somebody knew and dealt in the shares. But there are few successful prosecutions.

AIM

The Alternative Investment Market (AIM) is a kindergarten for companies that lack the mature trading record that the Stock Exchange requires for admission to the Official List,

the main body of traded shares. Created in June 1995, it is relatively new, as are most of the companies quoted on it. They are, by definition, risky investments. Any money invested in AIM stock should be regarded similarly to visiting a racetrack. You could lose the lot.

Tax

Dividends are paid net of tax, which is paid in advance by the company. This absolves most investors from having to pay tax up to the standard rate. If you pay higher-rate tax you must make up the difference. If you pay no tax, you can reclaim it.

So there you are. I have catered through the basics of what every shareholder should know. The most important quality for any investor is caution. Not everyone in the City is a crook, an Arthur Daley or a con-man. But some are.

Regarding anyone approaching you with an investment opportunity as you would a second-hand car dealer. Plenty of those are honest, too, and there are perfectly good cars on their forecourts. But there are two sides to every share purchase. If the shares you are being urged to buy are such a good deal, why is the other side so keen to sell? Happy investing.

The venture capital industry reflects the fortunes of a vital area of the economy: small and medium-sized enterprises. These businesses play a key role in wealth creation and job creation in the UK, in the European Union, in the United States and in "tiger economies" of South Asia. An economy with a thriving and expanding number of SMEs is almost certainly doing well.

In the UK, the venture capital industry is a relatively small but growing sector. It is a sector that is often overlooked, but it is a sector that is vital to the success of the UK economy. It is a sector that is often overlooked, but it is a sector that is vital to the success of the UK economy.

In seeking to do this, it is a number of principles that are at the heart of the venture capital industry. It is a sector that is often overlooked, but it is a sector that is vital to the success of the UK economy.

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Clare Stewart examines the public's reaction to gas competition

So do we just love being in control?



Bygone era: lack of choice in gas supply is a thing of the past

Remember that catchy slogan "don't you just love being in control", as offered by finger-snapping celebrities to induce a nice warm feeling about British Gas? As with many slogans, it probably scored more on catchiness than accuracy.

True, the average gas user was able to choose different ways of paying bills and to use more or less gas depending on their needs. But when it came to choosing a gas supplier, the element of choice disappeared. British Gas was the only option.

This is no longer the case. Deregulation means that by the first week of March nearly two million households will have been offered a chance to change to a different and cheaper gas supplier. Opening up the remainder of the market to competition will follow, but precise timing is a matter of debate between British Gas and Clare Spottiswoode, the regulator, who is keen to speed up the process.

Ironically, in the areas where the market has been opened up, the fact that consumers really are in control has been far from obvious, prompting criticism that not enough was done to inform and educate customers in advance. The change to being able to select from at most 15 licensed suppliers seems to have left consumers rather bemused.

The first phase of deregulation began last April and covered people living in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. While the message that switching supplier would lead to savings was not difficult to get across, consumer response was affected by worries that a switch would need a new meter or the installation of new pipes.

In fact, it should simply involve informing British Gas, settling the final bill and then paying the new supplier when necessary. Same gas, same pipes is the message suppliers are keen to communicate.

But householders were taken by surprise by the arrival of door-to-door salesmen. The high-pressure sales tactics of

some suppliers led to complaints from people who felt that they had been pushed into signing up without fully understanding their options. There were also instances of customers being switched to a new supplier without their knowledge. Tighter controls have now been introduced and all suppliers have signed a code of practice which can be enforced.

To add to the confusion in the market British Gas has just deregulated. The retail arm, which includes British Gas Home Energy, the supplier to the homes, is now called Centrica. BG plc is the exploration and distribution business which includes TransCo, the pipelines business. This remains the company to call if

you think there is a gas leak - regardless of who is supplying the gas.

Overall prices in both the first and second phase amount to an average saving of 20 per cent. But the actual saving that each household can achieve will be calculated according to the amount of gas used - the higher the usage, the lower the unit price - and how you choose to pay.

Calorix, the partnership between Calor Gas and Tesco, claims to have secured the largest share of the market in the South West, with more than 44,000 customers. Households paying an annual bill of £300 can save between £49 to £59 at Calorix's current tariffs, depending on whether they pay

by cheque or cash quarterly or by monthly direct debit. SWEBGas, part of South Western Electricity, offers a minimum saving of at least 17 per cent. On a current £300 gas bill this translates into savings of between £51 and £63.

But these savings are not shared across the board. According to research by the Gas Consumers Council and the National Right to Fuel Campaign, customers using pre-payment meters are losing out. Because of the expense involved administering such meters, pre-payment customers will pay on average 26 per cent more than those paying by direct debit.

Excluding the cost of pre-payment meters, prices for other customers do show a range of discounts and in general have been fixed for around a year, if not longer, from the time of signing.

What is still unknown is how prices will compare further down the line once the whole market has been opened up to competition.

At present British Gas cannot join the fray and cut its cost to match those of the new competitors. It can only do that once it has satisfied Ofgas that a genuine competitive market has been established.

Tempting as the cut-price offers appear, customers need to look closely at the small print. Many of the customer complaints investigated by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) during the first phase involved examples of potentially unfair clauses in customer contracts, such as the way gas usage estimates were made.

The full implications of deregulation have yet to be seen, and future price trends will be driven not just by the market price for gas but also by the outcome of a number of events. For example, the Monopolies and Mergers Commission is investigating the price British Gas charges for carrying gas in its pipeline. If the MMC requires prices to be reduced, suppliers will be able to pass on some of that to customers.

With a number of issues to be resolved between BG and Ofgas, it looks as if customers not included in the first phase of deregulation will have to wait until 1998 for cheaper gas to come their way. However one advantage may be that some of the teething problems will have been sorted out.

For further information, *Choice: The Ofgas Guide to Gas Competition* is available by calling freephone 0800 435702, quoting code F. The Gas Consumers Council also offers advice on 0645 060708.

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and James Kitchenham meets a man who brought gas contracts down to earth

Gas is no laughing matter

John Freake, a retired oil company geologist from Sussex, failed to see the funny side of British Gas's fixed-price "take-or-pay" contracts fiasco for which it expected its customers to pay.

So he was delighted when Kent and Sussex were chosen as early areas for competitive gas supply distributors under the deregulation of the industry. But then his problems started.

"I wanted to do an analysis of the different packages offered by the competing companies, but some of them were coy to the point of secrecy about what they were offering and it was almost impossible to get information from some companies."

"I originally contacted Ogas, the regulator, to get the names of the companies and then began telephoning them. Some of them took three or four calls to get a response and some still had not sent their information and contracts a month after I originally contacted them. It seemed a strange way to win customers."

Having had considerable experience of constructing and using databases in the oil industry, when he had most of the information from the competing companies to hand, he set up a database on his home computer.

His intention was to make an analysis to find the best supplier on the basis of tariff price, standing charge and method of payment.

He decided to exclude appliance maintenance costs as

he feels it is cheaper to use an independent engineer than to have a British Gas or similar service contract.

Likewise he dismissed store voucher offers and other tiny inducements as "an irrelevance". But again he hit problems trying to compare like-with-like for each company against his present British Gas contract.

"One company did not give details of its discounts at all. It simply had a box to tick on the contract if you were interested in a discount. I rang up to find out about the further discount and no one could tell me anything about it."

Eventually, of the 11 companies on whose figures he could do a reasonable analysis, Mr Freake found that Scottish Power and SWEBGas gave the greatest savings over British Gas at 27 per cent and 23.74 per cent respectively.

This was calculated using the cheapest option available — a monthly direct debit secured a 4 per cent discount, or a lower tariff rate. Most contracts are rolling ones, and companies offer fixed terms.

He concluded: "Some of these offers are not as transparent as they could be. I think Ogas could have insisted that contracts were offered on a standardised basis so that consumers could make easy direct comparisons between companies. Whichever company you choose, do read the supply contract carefully."



John Freake set up his own database to try to make sense of competing gas contracts

Company name	Saving (%) on British Gas	Tariff per kw/hour	Standing charge per year
Scottish Power	27	1.085	£36.46
SWEBGas	23.74	1.177	£0.00
British Fuels Gas	20.49	1.25	£0.00
Southern Electric	20.33	1.20	£30.60
Eastern Natural Gas	19.52	1.212	£31.02
Tesco & Celor Gas	19.06	1.254	£39.95
Amerasia	17.84	1.214	£47.00
Northern Electric	16.69	1.26	£28.98
London Total Energy	14.12	1.3	£29.20
Beacon Gas	11.92	1.36	£28.00
British Gas Trading	0	1.52	£38.34

Centrica moves dynamically — down

About £250,000 was spent by British Gas last year on a rebranding exercise for the two companies that were to emerge from its planned demerger. The sum bought two logos and two names — BG and Centrica. The provenance of the former is easy to guess; the latter, though, was dreamt up to signify "quickly moving and dynamic".

The appropriateness of the rebranding was felt by former British Gas shareholders this week as the shares of the newly demerged Centrica move quickly and dynamically down.

British Gas assets are now divided into BG plc, the gas supply and pipeline business, and Centrica, the retail side.

Centrica is also laden with the "take or pay" contracts and the Morecambe Bay gas field. These two factors continue to cast a shadow over the future performance of the company, as analysts in the gas market are not entirely clear what their impact will be. On the first day of trading, a total of 54.5 million Centrica shares changed hands and the price fell by 13.5 per cent to 65½p while 20 million BG shares changed hands lifting the price by 2½p to 174½p.

Yesterday the shares were 68½p and 175½p, respectively. This compares with the share price of the merged British Gas, at the end of last week, of 247½p. This represents a net loss to the estimated 1.7 million small shareholders in British Gas, Sids, of 1 per cent.

The price of Centrica was not helped by a pronouncement from Merrill Lynch, the broker, that the shares could be worth as little as 40p, though a trading range of 40p to 80p is expected.

Many financial advisers advise clients to sell Centrica. The stock may be very volatile and no dividend is likely in the foreseeable future. Mathew Orr, of Killik & Co, the broker, said: "This is not the type of company many small investors thought they were buying when they invested in British Gas." BG plc, the biggest part of the company, currently yields 7.1 per cent, high in comparison with other utilities. Some advisers advocate holding BG shares for the dividend alone. But these may be cut in future, as it is being examined by Clare Spottiswoode, the gas regulator, who wants greater competition. The Monopolies and Mergers Commission is also looking at pricing issues.

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Gavin Lumsden on how to increase wealth with a clear conscience

ETHICS have come out of the theology class and into the real world. Everyone, it seems, wants a piece of the action. Swampy, the anti-roads protester, has captured the nation's heart with his burrowing antics in Devon. Meanwhile, Diana, Princess of Wales, continues to command public respect with her campaign against Britain's export of landmines.

Increasingly, investors, too, are demanding that their money is used ethically. In addition to growing their wealth, they want to do some good in the world in the process. For many this means saying no to companies that harm the environment or contribute to the global war machine, including the manufacture of armaments and landmines.

Fortunately, there are up to 20 ethical and ecological unit trusts which have developed a decent track record in this kind of ethical investment. These include Abneth Ethical, Clerical Medical Evergreen and Eagle Star Environmental Opportunities. Most are available as PEPs, which means that you can enjoy tax-free growth as well as a clear conscience.

Ethical unit trusts use a combination of negative criteria to screen out unsuitable stocks. All of them, for instance, avoid companies making the bulk of their profits from tobacco, alcohol and pornography, reflecting the religious origins of ethical investment. To this most add environmental concerns to their list, frequently banning investments in nuclear energy.

Animal testing and oppressive regimes are also blacklisted. CIS, the Co-op's insurance arm, runs one of the biggest ethical unit trusts. It finds that people often invest in CIS Environ on behalf of their children.

David Mott, CIS spokesman, said: "There is a 'feel-good' factor to investing in ethical funds. Many people say they want to invest in their children's future financially, but then ask themselves what kind of world are they going

Investors in search of a piece of the ethical action



Diana, Princess of Wales, has pricked the public conscience

to living in? Ethical investment works on both fronts, providing a good return and attempting to solve some of the problems we have today."

As a result of this pressure, funds such as Friends Provident, Stewardship, Jupiter Ecology, NPI Global Care and Credit Suisse Fellowship are going out of their way to promote ethical businesses. These funds use positive criteria to select companies in conservation, pollution control and the manufacture of safety equipment, for instance.

Employment conditions are also on the agenda for Stephanie Howard, fund manager of the Credit Suisse fund. "We

also look for companies with a sympathetic approach to their employees, and particularly how they fit in with the local community," she said. "Many of our investments are in small companies with high research-and-development budgets. Often they are the biggest employer in the area."

This approach works well with small companies but can be problematic with larger organisations, which can have unethical operations alongside more worthy sides of the business.

For instance, few ethical funds would invest in large pharmaceutical companies which test products on ani-

mals, but they may happily focus on smaller biotechnology companies. On average, ethical funds are invested in only 30 per cent of companies on the FT-SE 100 index.

Alan Perkins, fund manager of Family Assurance's United Charities Ethical Fund, which has just been Pepped, says new issues and demergers are hard work for the ethical manager, who has to examine the company thoroughly before it lists.

Because of the complexity, ethical funds turn to organisations such as the Ethical Investment Research Service (Eiris) in London and the Manchester Business School to help them to compile a list of eligible investments.

These organisations regularly survey companies' attitudes and business practices. If you are interested in ethical investment Eiris also provides a list of independent financial advisers who specialise in the ethical arena. Further information is available from Eiris on 0171-735 1351.

However, all this research does result in extra charges. Although NPI and Jupiter have cut initial charges to 4.5 per cent and 4 per cent respectively, the average for the sector remains 5 per cent, around 2 per cent higher than many conventional alternatives. Annual charges tend to be more than 1.5 per cent, higher than the industry average.

Of course, as with all investments, performance, not charges, is the key. Fortunately, ethical investors do not have to pay for their conscience. Over the past five years only Clerical Medical Evergreen has obviously underperformed its peers and the FT-SE 100. Funds such as Eagle Star Environmental Opportunities, Allchurches Amity and City Financial/Acorn Ethical have broadly matched the £1.675 return that a £1,000 investment on the FT-SE 100 index would have given you.

Top of the pile is Credit Suisse Fellowship, which grew an impressive 134 per cent, turning £1,000 into £2,339, closely followed by Framlington Health with a return of £2,222. The latter, however, is not strictly an ethical fund, although it bears all the hallmarks of one by focusing on the US biotechnology sector. Both funds also get high ratings from the Allenbridge Group, which judges funds on consistency as well as overall performance.

Holden Meehan, an IFA firm in London, publishes a free guide to ethical funds. Telephone 0171-404 6442.

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Caroline Merrell on the plan to stop shoppers from losing interest

Sainsbury banks on new services

The chore of doing the weekly shopping will take a new twist in the coming months as three of the United Kingdom's biggest supermarkets begin to roll out banking services for their customers. Millions of people will now have access to credit cards and savings accounts which will give them discounts off their weekly shopping bills.

J Sainsbury this week unveiled its plan to offer banking services to its ten million customers via a joint venture with the Bank of Scotland. Sainsbury is spending around £30 million on the bank, through which it hopes to encourage greater customer loyalty and reverse its ailing fortunes. Sainsbury has begun to lose market share to Tesco and Sainsbury, and earlier this year was forced to issue a profit warning — an action that hit the share price and cut its market capitalisation by £75 million.

Sainsbury cited increased competition with the other supermarkets as the cause of the downgrade in profits from £70 million to £64 million for 1996 to 1997. Four million of this decrease was attributed to the launch of the bank, while a further £10 million reduction was attributed to the extra costs of its Reward loyalty card — a scheme that generates discounts for customers.

Sainsbury's Bank will offer a choice of two credit cards and two savings accounts. The credit cards can be used to build up reward points that can generate discounts on the weekly shopping bill, while the instant access saver account offers a market-leading interest rate of 5.75 per cent.

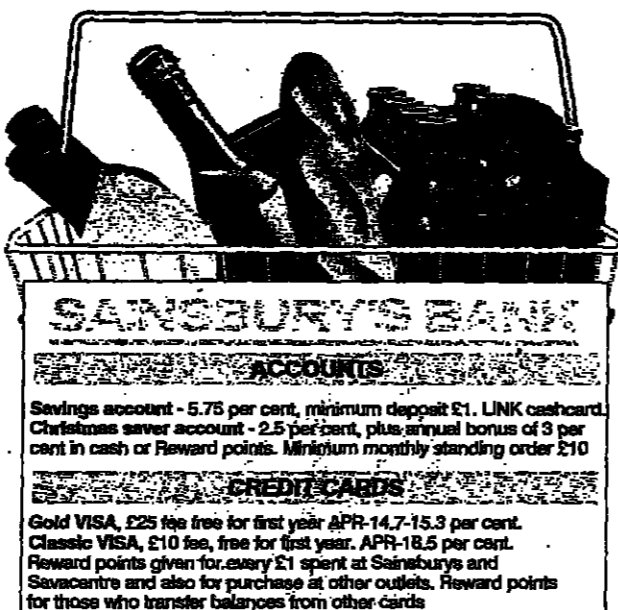
The other account, the monthly Christmas saving account, offers an interest rate of 2.5 per cent, plus an annual 3 per cent bonus if no money is withdrawn before the end of the year.

The 5.75 per cent interest compares with rates of between 0.75 and 3.15 per cent offered by Barclays, 0.5 and 3.25 per cent offered by Halifax, and 2 and 3.25 per cent offered by Midland.

Kevin McCarten, Sainsbury's marketing director, said: "We're pleased to be the first supermarket to open a bank and offer our customers choice and flexibility."



Supermarket first: the new Sainsbury's Bank will be available initially in 244 stores



With 250 points you can claim a £2.50 discount voucher, which means customers could benefit from a 1 to 2 per cent discount on their shopping bills. Sainsbury is also offering to give Air Miles in exchange for points generated through spending at its stores. Reward points generated through spending at other outlets will not qualify to be swapped for Air Miles.

Saving in the Christmas account can also bring benefits in terms of reward points. The

25 per cent interest and the 3 per cent bonus can be waived in favour of the points — a saving of £40 per month will generate 376 reward points in one year, plus 451 bonus points, representing a saving of £8.70 on groceries.

Sainsbury's Bank does not offer overdrafts, nor does it have any intention of doing so. A spokeswoman said: "This is a savings account, not a current account."

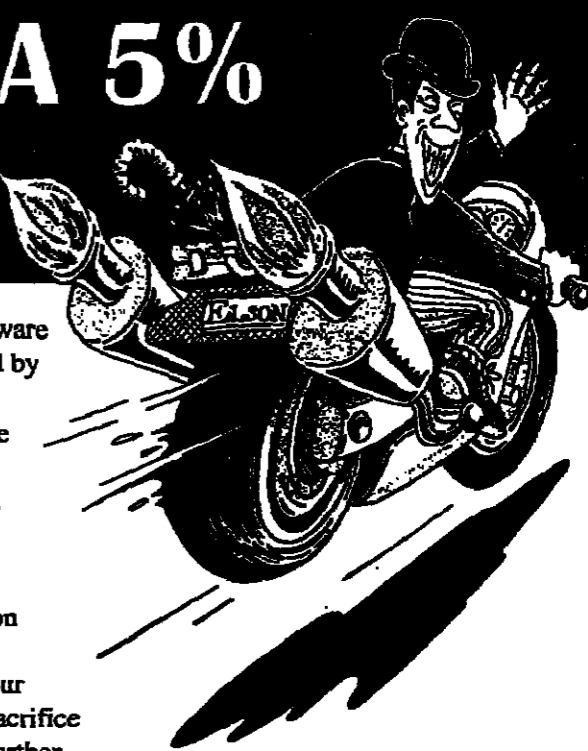
Sainsbury's Gold Visa card has an annual fee of £25 and an APR of 14.7 per cent, while the Classic Visa card has a £10 fee and an APR of 18.5 per cent. The annual fee is waived for the first year. The lowest APRs on the market are from RBS Advanta and the People's Bank of Connecticut, at 11.9 per cent and 14.4 per cent respectively.

Offerings from the other stores do not have quite the same range. Sainsbury, for instance, is keen to emphasise that it is not launching a bank. The store is offering a savings account in conjunction with Abbey National — the account offers 5 per cent interest and reward points for spending. Sainsbury may offer a fuller banking service at a later date.

Tesco, on the other hand, chose St Valentine's Day to abandon its link with NatWest and join forces with the Royal Bank of Scotland to set up a joint venture offering financial services. This store already offers Clubcard Plus, a savings account offering 5.5 per cent interest.

Tesco plans to offer a credit card in the summer and add additional products, including savings accounts and personal insurance, at a later date.

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Halifax Liquid Gold	2.45%	2.45%	2.65%	2.65%	2.95%	2.95%	3.25%	3.25%
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Source: Moneyfacts 18th February 1997

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Karen Zagor on what investors should do when markets are high

Play safe for a steady income

Investors are warned regularly that trying to time the stock market is a fool's game. After all, anyone who listened to the stock market bears and left their money in the building society last year would have missed out on one of the great bull runs of all time. But for many would-be investors, the rash of stock market record highs can lead to a real dilemma.

When markets are exceedingly high, there is a very real danger that they will plummet. Anyone able to take a 20-year view of the stock market should be able to ride out any storm, but investors near retirement do not have that luxury.

At the same time, those near retirement may be most in need of a way of boosting their income, and equity investments are often the best way to supplement a pension and compensate for a lost salary. Most advisers would agree

that anyone who cannot take a three-year or four-year view on their investment should steer clear of stocks. But even with markets at record levels, anyone who can take a long-term view should probably have some equities in their portfolio.

Mark Bolland, of Chamberlain de Broe, the independent financial adviser, says: "I am a bear, but it is riskier to be out of the market than in. The problem is, you could wait six months anticipating a crash and the market could hold its own."

"With the market so high, it makes sense to dribble your money in, either in monthly or quarterly instalments, and to make sure you have a good investment mix with some exposure to tracker funds, equity funds, individual stocks and preference shares to get the income you need. But you should always have a

chunk of cash on hand to help out if there is a market wobble."

How you structure your investments will depend largely on your income needs. If you have £250,000 to invest, perhaps from the sale of your family home, and you need an extra £500 a month, you could generate the income by leaving the money in the bank.

Other relatively safe income-generating options include gilts, which are currently yielding about 7.5 per cent and preference funds, which yield about 8.5 per cent to 9 per cent. But there will be some capital erosion with these investments, and the best place to compensate for that depreciation is in the stock market.

Jonathan Gumpel, of Brooks Macdonald Gayer, the independent financial adviser, says: "If you want complete security, I would advise stick-

ing the money in the building society. But for anyone who is 55 and looking for income over the next 20 years, I would probably advise being invested with a proportion of their funds perhaps set up as a quarterly savings plan to phase in the money."

"For people coming to us with cash, we would generally advise only being 45 per cent invested, then phasing in the other 55 per cent over a period of years. We would accelerate phasing the money in if there was a market fall."

Mr Gumpel believes that investment trusts are good value at the moment for investors looking for income because the prices already reflect concern about the high markets and a number of investment trusts are trading at a discount to their net assets.

He expects the discounts to narrow eventually, so investors should be able to profit from the narrowing, as well as receiving income from the investment.

"I would think a combination of UK high-interest funds such as Invesco Convertible, plus Scottish Mortgage for an element of growth and something like Murray International, which is wholly international, to take advantage of the strong pound at the moment would be a good mix," Mr Gumpel says.

Nervous income investors can take heart from the knowledge that, at a time of high markets, they are in a stronger position than those investing for capital growth.

With the recession behind us, we are not in a period where companies are cutting their dividends, so even if the market crashes there should be a continuing stream of income.

So if you invest in solid companies with a good business and a good cashflow, then you should continue to receive income, in the form of dividends, even if the share price dips. And there is always the possibility that the share price will have recovered or even improved by the time you decide to sell.



TO PROTECT investors against a 1929-style stock market crash, Brooks Macdonald Gayer is recommending the Close Escalator unit trusts from Close Fund Management.

The 100 fund provides complete capital protection if the market falls, while allowing investors to benefit from a portion of any rise in the FT-SE 100 index. The 95 fund gives greater exposure to stock market

gains while limiting losses to 5 per cent of capital. Unlike most guaranteed funds, there is no lock-in period and the funds are unit trusts and as such taxed as capital gains and not income. Minimum investment is £1,000, or £100 per month. Readers of *The Times* can buy the funds at a 2 per cent discount until March 20 through Brooks Macdonald Gayer (0171 499 6424).

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Guinness Flight offers a frontier punt

For investors who don't have sleepless nights worrying where their money is going, the death this week of Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leader, provides an excellent opportunity to get into the world's most exciting emerging market.

Helped by the free market reforms which Deng introduced in 1978, China has been repeating the extraordinary economic miracle of nearby Japan and Taiwan and is forecast to grow 10 per cent a year until the year 2000. With nearly a quarter of the world's population, the country is poised to become the economic superpower of the 21st century, in much the same way that the US

did in the 20th. The integration of Hong Kong in July is likely to turn out to be a reverse takeover in which the capitalist ethos of the tiny colony controls the giant hinterland beyond it. Certainly, that is the hope of Guinness Flight which today launches its Hong Kong and China unit trust. The company launched an offshore China fund a year ago which has achieved nearly 30 per cent growth for sterling investors.

Howard Flight, Guinness Flight managing director, says political uncertainty means Hong Kong and China are undervalued compared with the US and UK. With

Deng's successor, Jiang Zemin, still to consolidate his position and the handover of Hong Kong imminent, this uncertainty is bound to persist.

However, there are other reasons for giving China a wide berth. While its burgeoning middle class will become more vocal for political freedom, the army that perpetrated the Tiananmen Square massacre is still ready to back the Communist Party. Growing economic inequality is also causing enormous pressures in China's regions, with some pundits predicting a break-up of the country.

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* SOURCE: HENDRICK FROM 1982 OFFER TO 2000 WITH NET INCOME INVESTED TO 31.12.96. OVER 5 YEARS PROLIFIC'S FAR EASTERN UNIT TRUST WAS 2ND QUARTILE, SPECIAL SITUATIONS UNIT TRUST WAS 3RD QUARTILE AND TECHNOLOGY UNIT TRUST WAS 1ST QUARTILE. £1,000 INVESTED 15 YEARS AGO WOULD BE WORTH £1,700 (FAR EAST), £2,500 (SPECIAL) AND £3,800 (TECHNOLOGY) RESPECTIVELY. REGULAR SAVINGS OF £50 PER MONTH OVER 5 YEARS WOULD BE WORTH £1,400 (FAR EAST), £2,100 (SPECIAL) AND £3,200 (TECHNOLOGY) RESPECTIVELY. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT NECESSARILY A GUIDE TO THE FUTURE. THE VALUE OF INVESTMENTS AND THE INCOME FROM THEM CAN GO DOWN AS WELL AS UP AND YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO GET BACK THE FULL AMOUNT ORIGINALLY INVESTED. EXCHANGE RATES MAY CAUSE THE VALUE OF UNDERLYING INVESTMENTS TO GO UP OR DOWN. THE TAX TREATMENT OF PEPs MAY BE ALTERED BY FUTURE LEGISLATION ISSUED BY PROLIFIC UNIT TRUST MANAGERS LIMITED. REGULATED BY THE PERSONAL INVESTMENT AUTHORITY AND A MEMBER OF AUTP. 2% DISCOUNT APPLIES TO ALL LUMP SUM UNIT TRUST INVESTMENTS MADE BEFORE 11AM ON TUESDAY 18.2.97.

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WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

Ernie becomes a lottery

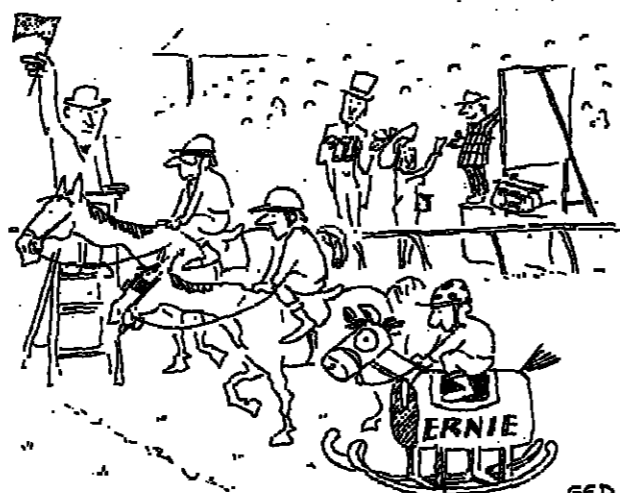
From Mr F. R. Yule

Sir, It used to be said that if one had the allowed maximum holding of Premium Bonds the chances of winning a prize were in the approximate region of 1.1 to 1.

Now that the number of prizes has been reduced, has anyone worked out what an individual's chances are now?

For those of us who were satisfied with little and often and a tax-free income approximating to the average yield, Premium Bonds represented a real investment; now it seems that we are participating in a monthly National Savings lottery.

Maybe Ernie was just getting tired churning out the bread and butter his investors crave and has ambitions to be on television? Yours faithfully, F. R. YULE, 1 The Orchard, 7 Tipperlin Road, Edinburgh.



Automatic transfers between accounts

From Mr N. R. Hill

Sir, Six years ago I had the same problem as Mr Robert Breckman (Weekend Money letters, February 15) with automatic transfers between my current and deposit accounts. I recommend that he transfers his account to the Royal Bank of Scotland. As a chartered accountant he will surely qual-

ify for a Gold Cheque Account in which case he will be offered free transfer of funds into and out of a Gold Deposit Account, for example, and can set an upper limit on the balance to be automatically maintained in the cheque account. Yours faithfully, NEVILLE HILL, 109 High Street, Portsmouth.

Time delay costs money

From Mr I. McEwan

Sir, My wife and I paid the first instalment of tax under self-assessment by direct funds transfer on January 28, this year. The money would have reached the Inland Revenue the next day, in plenty of time to meet the January 31 deadline.

We were surprised last week to receive a statement for my wife indicating that her payment had reached the Revenue on February 4 and, being a late payment, was subject to interest. The Cheltenham tax office advised us that if the payment was late my wife must pay the interest and, in future, we should make adequate arrangements to ensure payments arrive on time.

My statement of account arrived on Saturday and showed that I had paid my tax in full on January 27. Yours faithfully, IAN MCEWAN, The White House, Alderton, Tewkesbury.

Pension drawdown and annuities

From Mr R. E. Lee

Sir, I write in response to Adrian Simmonds's letter (February 1) in which he asserts his wish to "invest at least a portion of a large pension fund accumulated into equities". This is precisely what the Inland Revenue now allows under "pension drawdown".

Admittedly, an annuity must be purchased by age 75 under current legislation, but, even then, funds can remain invested in equities and driven by either a with-profits or unlinked portfolio. The question of a gilt-driven annuity need not arise if the annuitant is not predisposed towards such an investment medium.

Although the capital element is lost to the pooled fund of the insurance company on

annuity purchase at 75 or earlier, inasmuch as the income generated is surplus to requirements as would seem to be the case from Mr Simmonds's comments, this could be fed directly to one's heir or into some kind of savings plan written under suitable trust for inheritance tax avoidance.

Incidentally, the current excellent pension drawdown facility is developed directly from a

pioneering product introduced in 1994 by The Equitable Life known as the managed annuity. The difference between managed annuity and currently available plans? Under managed annuity, the policyholder was not compelled to buy an annuity at any age. Yours faithfully, ROBERT LEE, Olivers Farmhouse, Meadow Road, Wickham Bishops, Essex.

Building societies insult disabled members

From Mr J. B. Slack

Sir, I have followed the saga of the treatment of disabled Woolwich and Halifax account members with interest because I am such a person. I have been a member of the Woolwich for 29 years and my wife has had accounts in the Halifax for six. I have used a wheelchair for five years.

Fortunately, I am the first named person on a joint account in the Woolwich, so the force of being a disabled person not qualifying for shares does not affect me.

I do, however, feel insulted that such people are treated in this insensitive manner. Disabled people, who need carers to deal physically with their financial affairs, have lost out a great deal on life already and many are in dire mental and financial straits without yet another embarrassing "slap in the face", having to fight for what is rightfully theirs.

Although it would require

some effort, the societies could register disabled qualifying members by using orange card numbers or some other meaningful system. I am sure the rules of the societies would soon be changed if one of the directors was in such a predicament. No future conversion should have any excuses for this type of exposure. The societies have time to put their houses in order.

There is time for the Woolwich, between now and July 7, to implement an administrative structure, but the resolve is, for the time being, sadly and insultingly, lacking.

If a disabled member, possibly a member, were to be thus treated, there would be a major input from the RSPCA and prosecutions threatened by that organisation.

Yours faithfully, JOHN SLACK, 2 Field Cottage Road, Eaton Socon, St Neots, Cambridgeshire.

CGT ALLOWANCES - JANUARY 1997

The indexed rise for calculating the indexation allowance on assets disposed of in January 1997

Month purchased	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
January	0.969	0.778	0.693	0.604	0.544	0.495	0.391	
February	0.961	0.771	0.679	0.598	0.538	0.489	0.381	
March	0.944	0.759	0.675	0.594	0.534	0.485	0.375	
April	0.905	0.832	0.742	0.659	0.581	0.517	0.459	0.351
May	0.892	0.824	0.735	0.652	0.578	0.515	0.454	0.343
June	0.886	0.820	0.731	0.648	0.579	0.515	0.448	0.338
July	0.886	0.810	0.723	0.641	0.573	0.517	0.447	0.337
August	0.886	0.802	0.717	0.637	0.573	0.512	0.431	0.323
September	0.886	0.794	0.713	0.638	0.571	0.508	0.424	0.324
October	0.877	0.788	0.705	0.635	0.568	0.500	0.410	0.314
November	0.869	0.782	0.698	0.610	0.555	0.493	0.404	0.303
December	0.871	0.777	0.699	0.608	0.550	0.495	0.400	0.300
1990	1.991	1.992	1.993	1.994	1.995	1.996	1.997	
January	0.292	0.188	0.139	0.120	0.093	0.058	0.028	
February	0.285	0.180	0.133	0.112	0.087	0.051	0.023	
March	0.272	0.175	0.129	0.108	0.084	0.047	0.019	
April	0.234	0.160	0.112	0.088	0.071	0.036	0.012	
May	0.228	0.157	0.108	0.084	0.067	0.032	0.010	
June	0.219	0.151	0.108	0.085	0.067	0.031	0.009	
July	0.218	0.154	0.112	0.087	0.072	0.036	0.013	
August	0.205	0.151	0.112	0.083	0.067	0.030	0.008	
September	0.194	0.147	0.108	0.088	0.065	0.029	0.004	
October	0.185	0.143	0.104	0.089	0.063	0.031	0.004	
November	0.188	0.139	0.105	0.090	0.063	0.031	0.003	
December	0.189	0.138	0.109	0.088	0.065	0.025	0.001	

The 1st month for disposal by individuals on or after April 6, 1985 (April 1, 1985 for companies) is the month in which the allowable expenditure was incurred, or March 1982 where the expenditure was incurred before that month.

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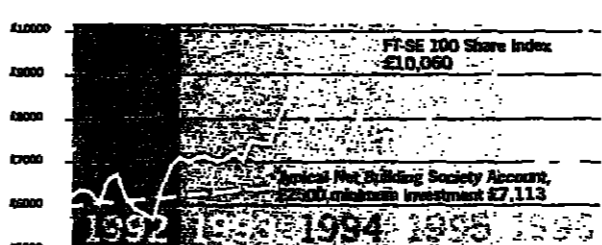
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* Source: Micropal
Past performance is not necessarily a guide to the future. The value of investments and the income from them can go down as well as up.



Growth of the FT-SE 100 Share Index against a typical Building Society Account, £2500 minimum investment. Source: Micropal 13.12.96. Offer to offer prices, Gross Reinvestment, based on UK Sterling, calculator: lump sum (£5000).

The information reflects our understanding of current legislation and tax regulations which are both subject to change.

The Guardian Direct Top 100 tracker PEP is a unit trust investment so the value of the units and income from them can go down as well as up. On the assumption of the units you may receive back less than you invested. In the event of the income from the trust being insufficient to meet the annual fund manager's fee and other allowable expenses, then the manager reserves the right to be remunerated from the capital value of the trust. Tax legislation may change in the future. The value of any tax relief depends upon the financial circumstances of the investor.

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[illegible][illegible]

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Call It A Day to post Kempton success

(2.30) to complete a quick treble, while at Haydock, Cebatte (3.50) can advertise his Arkle Challenge Trophy claims at the expense of Flying Instructor.

At Musselburgh, Shanavogh (3.10) should appreciate the drop in class after possibly needing the run when a disappointing favourite behind King Pin at Ayr last time. The in-form Montvra, a course and-distance winner, can give weight away to his four rivals in the 3.45.

440: Ocean Hawk's game
defend of Pleasure Shared at
Haydock five weeks ago gives
him a favourite's chance here
with five runners out of the
handicap and question marks
against . his main rivals.
Escartefague has been crying
out for this kind of trip but
still looks poorly handi-
capped.
Gillan Cove, without a win
for two years, is making his
seasonal debut while Castle
Kellyleader, Pharanear and
Conquering Leader are re-
turning to hurdling after en-
joying mixed fortunes over
fences. Of those, Pharanear
makes the most appeal as an
each-way alternative.

RICHAUD EVANS

2.45 GREENLAW'S GRAND NATIONAL TRUHAL		BCCI	
HANDICAP CHASE (Grade III: 549,904-3m 41 (11)yd) (7-11 runners)			
1	3PP-2ND	COUNTLY BEETTER 30 (F.R.F.S.) (41yld) C Brando 31-11-9	6 G Braddy
2	12-13-3	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
3	1213-3	SUNNY BAY 37 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
4	21-23-3	NORD ANSON 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	10M-ABR-11-9
5	21-23-3	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
6	22-23-10	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
7	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
8	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
9	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
10	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
11	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
12	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
13	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
14	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
15	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
16	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
17	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
18	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
19	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
20	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
21	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
22	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
23	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
24	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
25	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
26	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
27	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
28	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
29	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
30	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
31	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
32	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
33	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
34	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
35	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
36	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
37	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
38	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
39	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
40	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
41	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
42	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
43	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
44	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
45	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
46	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
47	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
48	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
49	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
50	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
51	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ
52	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	4 G Braddy
53	10-11-9	THE LONESTAR 36 (J.D.P.D.S.) (Nile) S Green 7-10-11-9	9 C F Summ

[illegible]

2.15 STRETTON LESSON SELECT HORSE		BBCT	
(\$1,065.00, 7th runners)			
01	0191-60 TRACER HORN 25 (R.D. GUS) (Trainer: James Farnham) M Pgs 5-11-12	G F Semon	86
2	142714 MISTWINGLEY 14 (KID GUS) 4 (Copper) 1 Trainer: James 5-1-7	G Mander	86
3	1171 JUVENUS 14 (KID GUS) 4 (Copper) 1 Trainer: James 5-1-7	G Mander	86
4	0100-40 WINGSFOOT PET 50 (GUS) 5 (Gus) 1 Trainer: James 6-1-4	G Mander	86
5	3940-40 NISSAR 14 (GUS) 5 (Gus) 1 Trainer: James 6-1-4	G Mander	86
6	1-5640 MARCHANT MING 6 (KID GUS) 4 (Copper) 1 Trainer: James 5-1-4	G Mander	86
7	3940-40 NISSAR 14 (GUS) 4 (Copper) 1 Trainer: James 5-1-4	G Mander	86
BETTING: 5-1 Manderpet, 5-2 August, 7-2 Mander, 8-1 Knighted Pet, Trage Horn 10-1 Mander, 20-1 Mander			
1986: MINGLEY 6-1-7 A Mander (4-4-6) 1 (Copper) 7 ran			
FORM GUIDE			
FOCUS			
<p>TRACER HORN Head Closes: Good mare at 19-former grade 11 Sirenia Handicap under course and distance (10-1) 4-3 runner going 10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100-101-102-103-104-105-106-107-108-109-110-111-112-113-114-115-116-117-118-119-120-121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128-129-130-131-132-133-134-135-136-137-138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145-146-147-148-149-150-151-152-153-154-155-156-157-158-159-160-161-162-163-164-165-166-167-168-169-170-171-172-173-174-175-176-177-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218-219-220-221-222-223-224-225-226-227-228-229-230-231-232-233-234-235-236-237-238-239-240-241-242-243-244-245-246-247-248-249-250-251-252-253-254-255-256-257-258-259-260-261-262-263-264-265-266-267-268-269-270-271-272-273-274-275-276-277-278-279-280-281-282-283-284-285-286-287-288-289-290-291-292-293-294-295-296-297-298-299-300-301-302-303-304-305-306-307-308-309-310-311-312-313-314-315-316-317-318-319-320-321-322-323-324-325-326-327-328-329-330-331-332-333-334-335-336-337-338-339-340-341-342-343-344-345-346-347-348-349-350-351-352-353-354-355-356-357-358-359-360-361-362-363-364-365-366-367-368-369-370-371-372-373-374-375-376-377-378-379-380-381-382-383-384-385-386-387-388-389-390-391-392-393-394-395-396-397-398-399-400-401-402-403-404-405-406-407-408-409-410-411-412-413-414-415-416-417-418-419-420-421-422-423-424-425-426-427-428-429-430-431-432-433-434-435-436-437-438-439-440-441-442-443-444-445-446-447-448-449-450-451-452-453-454-455-456-457-458-459-460-461-462-463-464-465-466-467-468-469-470-471-472-473-474-475-476-477-478-479-480-481-482-483-484-485-486-487-488-489-490-491-492-493-494-495-496-497-498-499-500-501-502-503-504-505-506-507-508-509-510-511-512-513-514-515-516-517-518-519-520-521-522-523-524-525-526-527-528-529-530-531-532-533-534-535-536-537-538-539-540-541-542-543-544-545-546-547-548-549-550-551-552-553-554-555-556-557-558-559-560-561-562-563-564-565-566-567-568-569-570-571-572-573-574-575-576-577-578-579-580-581-582-583-584-585-586-587-588-589-590-591-592-593-594-595-596-597-598-599-600-601-602-603-604-605-606-607-608-609-610-611-612-613-614-615-616-617-618-619-620-621-622-623-624-625-626-627-628-629-630-631-632-633-634-635-636-637-638-639-640-641-642-643-644-645-646-647-648-649-650-651-652-653-654-655-656-657-658-659-660-661-662-663-664-665-666-667-668-669-670-671-672-673-674-675-676-677-678-679-680-681-682-683-684-685-686-687-688-689-690-691-692-693-694-695-696-697-698-699-700-701-702-703-704-705-706-707-708-709-710-711-712-713-714-715-716-717-718-719-720-721-722-723-724-725-726-727-728-729-730-731-732-733-734-735-736-737-738-739-740-741-742-743-744-745-746-747-748-749-750-751-752-753-754-755-756-757-758-759-760-761-762-763-764-765-766-767-768-769-770-771-772-773-774-775-776-777-778-779-780-781-782-783-784-785-786-787-788-789-790-791-792-793-794-795-796-797-798-799-800-801-802-803-804-805-806-807-808-809-810-811-812-813-814-815-</p>			

3.72.0		SPRING LIFE MAIDEN HURDLE		
(23.165) 2m (6) (4 runners)				
1	2-50	ARCTIC FLY EQUUSQUE 29 (S. Salsbery) M. Hester-Flis 5-1-7.	S. Pevall	69
2	2-50	BULLYCHAMP FALCON 16 (P. J. Stuart) P. Hunt 7-1-7.	G. Upton	70
3	0-40	BATTLE CREEK TON (Stanley Patten) J. Hunt 7-1-7.	W. Shinn	71
4	0-40	DOES NOT GO! (D. Hunt) D. Stewart 7-1-7.	A. Gaffney	72
5	0-40	FAVORITE CROWN 11 (Mrs J. Morgan) J. O'Neill 6-1-7.	R. Balfour	73
6	0-40	FLYING LION 16 (P. J. Stuart) P. Hunt 7-1-7.	A. Gaffney	74
7	0-40	PHILARDO (Mrs J. Morgan) P. Hunt 7-1-7.	R. Balfour	75
8	0-40	SWISS GONGRE 84 (William Bailey Patten) J. O'Neill 7-1-7.	D. James (7)	76
9	0-40	VALLEY PASS 30 (C. Hunt) Patten R. Wingham 5-1-7.	G. P. Shaw	77
10	0-40	WINDMILL GARDEN (C. Hester) M. Hester-Flis 6-1-7.	D. James	78
11	0-40	WINDMILL GARDEN (C. Hester) M. Hester-Flis 6-1-7.	T. J. O'Neill (7)	79
12	0-40	SWIRE 48 (Mrs S. Salsbery) S. Salsbery 7-1-7.	G. Bradley	80
13	0-40	THE LUCKY 14 (Mrs S. Salsbery) S. Salsbery 7-1-7.	D. James	81
14	0-40	LOVE THE BLUES 14 (Mrs S. Salsbery) S. Salsbery 7-1-7.	R. Munnery (8)	82
15	0-40	TRAPLINE 16 (P. J. Stuart) M. Hester-Flis 6-1-7.	R. Kavanagh	83
BETTING: 4-5 for Shinn, 5-2 for O'Neill, 5-1 for Patten, 6-1 for Bailey Patten, 10-1 for Lee. The others at 10-1.				
1956: MAGDERIE 5-1-7 (P. J. Macdonald) (7-2) R. Lee 1st run.				
3.50		BELLCHAMP HEMLOCK RIDGES CHASE (24.486 2m) (4 runners)		
(21.111)		CELEBRATE ST (J. Hutton) (Stanford Bridge) C. Mann 6-11-7.		J. Hutton
1	2-50	FLYING BISTROTIER 7 (P. J. Stuart) P. Hunt 7-1-7.	R. Balfour	89
2	0-40	PRIMO-2 PRIMO 2 (Mrs S. Pevall) G. Mann 7-1-7.	R. Balfour	90
3	0-40	NEARLY KNOWS 11 (Mrs S. Pevall) G. Mann 7-1-7.	D. Webb	91
4	0-40	NEARLY KNOWS 11 (Mrs S. Pevall) G. Mann 7-1-7.	D. Webb	92
BETTING: 4-5 for Cattle, 2-1 for Bistrotier, 10-1 for Knolls, 10-1 for Huttons Bay.				
1956: SPYING LION 7-11-7 M. Dwyer (11-11) H. Reynolds 4-11-7.				
4.25		TARVIN STANDARD NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE		
(21.557) 2m (12) runners				
1	ARCTIC FLY EQUUSQUE 29 (S. Salsbery) M. Hester-Flis 5-1-7.		Mr A. Wente (7)	93

2	6	BUCKS HEEPS 7 (J Anthony) 1 Wilson 5-11-7	D Faver (2)
3	7	PERFORM PRIZES 10 (Pumpkin) 10 Minkley 6-11-7	O Tormey
4	8	HENRY CROFT STAFF (R Redding) 4 Nicholson 6-11-7	T Henson (2)
5	9	POLITICAL POWER (W Sander) 10 Jenkins 5-11-7	M A Mitchell
6	10	PERFORM 28 (P Lyndon) 10 Woodhouse 5-11-7	P Minkley (2)
7	11	PERFORM 28 (P Lyndon) 10 Woodhouse 5-11-7	A Henson (2)
8	12	LINWOOD 11 (Evelyn) 14 G Richards 6-11-7	R H Hulse
9	13	LINWOOD 11 (Evelyn) 14 G Richards 6-11-7	R Gorman (2)
10	14	STORMY (C Sharon) 14 Gorman 4-10-6	G Walsh
11	15	LAST QUINER (M Sider) 14 Henson 4-10-6	G Lene (2)
12	16	WISE GUNNER 18 (A Burrell) 10 Page 4-10-6	N Copeley (7)

BETTING: 5-2 Henna Coat Star, 5-1 Portman, Woe Dunes, 6-1 Arctic Fox, Linwood, 10-1 Political Power, 16-1 Stormy.

1996: BALLAD MONSTER 4-10-6 5 College Fun (3-1 Ind) 1 Fitzgerald 79 min

COURSE SPECIALISTS						
TRAINERS		Horse			JOCKEYS	
	Wins	Runs	%	Wins	Places	%
T Fawcett	3	7	42.9	C F Sanger	4	22.0
G Richards	32	109	30.5	C J Mingo	5	22.2
T Tate	6	17	35.3	A Duggan	8	26.0
H Henderson	5	22	22.7	G Bradley	8	26.2
J Fitzgerald	14	53	26.4	J O'Brien	11	36.1
N Turland-Dennis	16	63	25.4	P Hemen	30	15.0
					10	72
						13.9

FORM FOCUS -

FORM FOCUS

<p>OCEAN HAWK last Pleasure Steam #1 to 5-nines grade 9 Long Distance Hawaii at Harbord 11-17-68 left with sail to 5-11-69 seller #1 133 stn. EMBARTERIDGE 104W 5H 1st to Cordway Land to grade 1 AIG Green Champion</p>	<p>Joan (Am 2d, good to soft) with PHARENAIR (4th born 4th 4th 3rd March 95. CONQUERING LEAD- ing 100 lb 10 lb 10 lb 10 lb 10 lb 10 lb 10 lb Collections (2nd 5th good on penultimas shot) YARRIS BRIDGE last Southern Plains #1 in 9-</p>
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COURSE SPECIALISTS						
TRAINERS		Wins	Pls.	JOCKEYS	Wins	Pls.
Mike A. Pennell	2	4	75.0	P. Hareley	3	12
John J. Murr	2	17	41.2	W. Harrison	14	56
C. J. Breen	3	9	35.7	M. Whitham	18	21.2
C. J. Breen	3	9	33.3	N. Harrison	4	20
P. Webber	3	30	30.0	R. Dunsberry	21	112
P. Webber	3	30	30.0	A. Hickey	3	27

MARK JACKSON, who runs a livery yard at Westhilde, near Hereford, is virtually playing at home today when he saddles

[illegible]

DONCASTER

THUNDERER
2.00 Souze, 2.30 Bell Staffboy, 3.05 Star Rage, 3.40 Fitzwilliam, 4.15 Noyan, 4.45 Dual Image, 5.15 All Done.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO FIRM IN PLACES) SIS

2.00 OPEN MORNING SELLING HURDLE

(£1,640; 2m 110yds) (20 runners)
1 3128 CULPIN 12 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 313 PROUD MARE 9 (10) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 314 DAME PROSPECT 7 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 315 DREXIN TONG 30 (10) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 316 MAGICAL BLUES 22 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 317 COUNTRY 302 (10) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 318 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 319 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
9 320 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
10 321 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
11 322 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
12 323 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
13 324 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
14 325 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
15 326 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
16 327 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
17 328 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
18 329 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
19 330 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
20 331 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

2.30 COME BACK THE SCENES NOVICES

CHASE (2,873; 3m) (4)
1 311 BELL STAFFBOY 14 (5,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 312 MONMOUTH 22 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 313 MONMOUTH 22 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 314 MONMOUTH 22 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

3.05 DONCASTER RACECOURSE SPONSORSHIP

CLUB HURDLE (2,487; 2m 110yds) (10)
1 2209 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 2210 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 2211 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 2212 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 2213 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 2214 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 2215 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 2216 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
9 2217 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
10 2218 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

3.40 RACING IS FUN JUVENILE NOVICES

HURDLE (2,405; 2m 40yds) (12)
1 2219 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 2220 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 2221 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 2222 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 2223 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 2224 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 2225 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 2226 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
9 2227 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
10 2228 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
11 2229 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
12 2230 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

4.15 BANTRY NOVICES HURDLE CHASE

(£3,600; 2m 110yds) (7)
1 2231 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 2232 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 2233 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 2234 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 2235 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 2236 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 2237 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

4.45 FURNINGHAM HURDLE CHASE

(£2,885; 2m 110yds) (4)
1 2238 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 2239 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 2240 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 2241 CALLOUSE BAY 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

5.15 DONCASTER INTERMEDIATE NATIONAL

HUNT FLAT RACE (Mares; £1,035; 2m 110yds) (9)
1 261 COUNTRY ROSE 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 262 COUNTRY ROSE 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 263 COUNTRY ROSE 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 264 COUNTRY ROSE 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 265 COUNTRY ROSE 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 266 COUNTRY ROSE 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 267 COUNTRY ROSE 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 268 COUNTRY ROSE 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
9 269 COUNTRY ROSE 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

MUSSELBURGH

THUNDERER
2.10 Swift Riposte, 2.40 Movac, 3.10 Shanewagh, 3.45 Montrose, 4.20 Hare Comes Herbie, 4.50 Double Agent, 5.20 Far Ahead.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

2.10 ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND MAIDEN

HURDLE (Div 1: £1,720; 2m) (8)
1 5009 BLOOD BROTHER 16 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 5010 BLOOD BROTHER 16 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 5011 BLOOD BROTHER 16 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 5012 BLOOD BROTHER 16 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 5013 BLOOD BROTHER 16 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 5014 BLOOD BROTHER 16 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 5015 BLOOD BROTHER 16 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 5016 BLOOD BROTHER 16 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

2.40 FIONA P CRAIG NOVICES HURDLE CHASE

(£2,688; 3m) (11)
1 10094 MONYAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 10095 MONYAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 10096 MONYAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 10097 MONYAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 10098 MONYAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 10099 MONYAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 10100 MONYAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 10101 MONYAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
9 10102 MONYAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
10 10103 MONYAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
11 10104 MONYAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

3.10 ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND MAIDEN

HURDLE (Qualifier: £1,035; 2m 40yds) (7)
1 2130 ANTIACRAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 2131 ANTIACRAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 2132 ANTIACRAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 2133 ANTIACRAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 2134 ANTIACRAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 2135 ANTIACRAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 2136 ANTIACRAC 26 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: DONCASTER

3.40 Port Vale, 4.20 Hare Comes Herbie, 4.50 Double Agent, 5.20 Far Ahead.

4.50 Double Agent, 5.20 Far Ahead, 5.50 Double Agent, 6.20 Far Ahead.

6.20 Far Ahead, 6.50 Double Agent, 7.20 Far Ahead, 7.50 Double Agent.

7.50 Double Agent, 8.20 Far Ahead, 8.50 Double Agent, 9.20 Far Ahead.

9.20 Far Ahead, 9.50 Double Agent, 10.20 Far Ahead, 10.50 Double Agent.

10.50 Double Agent, 11.20 Far Ahead, 11.50 Double Agent, 12.20 Far Ahead.

12.20 Far Ahead, 12.50 Double Agent, 13.20 Far Ahead, 13.50 Double Agent.

13.50 Double Agent, 14.20 Far Ahead, 14.50 Double Agent, 15.20 Far Ahead.

15.20 Far Ahead, 15.50 Double Agent, 16.20 Far Ahead, 16.50 Double Agent.

16.50 Double Agent, 17.20 Far Ahead, 17.50 Double Agent, 18.20 Far Ahead.

18.20 Far Ahead, 18.50 Double Agent, 19.20 Far Ahead, 19.50 Double Agent.

19.50 Double Agent, 20.20 Far Ahead, 20.50 Double Agent, 21.20 Far Ahead.

21.20 Far Ahead, 21.50 Double Agent, 22.20 Far Ahead, 22.50 Double Agent.

22.50 Double Agent, 23.20 Far Ahead, 23.50 Double Agent, 24.20 Far Ahead.

24.20 Far Ahead, 24.50 Double Agent, 25.20 Far Ahead, 25.50 Double Agent.

25.50 Double Agent, 26.20 Far Ahead, 26.50 Double Agent, 27.20 Far Ahead.

27.20 Far Ahead, 27.50 Double Agent, 28.20 Far Ahead, 28.50 Double Agent.

28.50 Double Agent, 29.20 Far Ahead, 29.50 Double Agent, 30.20 Far Ahead.

30.20 Far Ahead, 30.50 Double Agent, 31.20 Far Ahead, 31.50 Double Agent.

LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDERER
1.50 Hawall Storm, 2.20 Roffey Spinney, 2.50 Roman Reel, 3.25 Ruff Gift, 3.55 Robo Magic, 4.30 English Invader, 5.00 Le Sport.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO FIRM IN PLACES) SIS

1.50 MERLIN SELLING HURDLE

(Div 1: £1,784; 1m) (12 runners)
1 6480 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 6481 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 6482 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 6483 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 6484 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 6485 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 6486 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 6487 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
9 6488 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
10 6489 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
11 6490 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
12 6491 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

2.20 BUZZARD HURDLE

(3-Y-O; £3,232; 50yds) (8)
1 6492 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 6493 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 6494 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 6495 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 6496 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 6497 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 6498 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 6499 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

2.50 MERLIN SELLING HURDLE

(Div 1: £1,784; 1m) (12)
1 6492 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 6493 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 6494 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 6495 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 6496 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 6497 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 6498 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 6499 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
9 6500 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
10 6501 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
11 6502 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
12 6503 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

3.25 BARN OWL MAIDEN STAKES

(£3,339; 1m) (10)
1 6504 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 6505 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 6506 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 6507 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 6508 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 6509 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 6510 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 6511 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
9 6512 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
10 6513 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

3.55 SPARROWHAWK HURDLE CHASE

(£5,053; 60yds) (9)
1 6514 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 6515 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 6516 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 6517 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 6518 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 6519 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 6520 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 6521 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
9 6522 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

4.30 OSPREY HURDLE

(£2,843; 2m) (9)
1 6523 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 6524 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 6525 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 6526 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 6527 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 6528 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 6529 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 6530 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
9 6531 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

5.00 HARRIER LIMITED STAKES

(£2,451; 70yds) (7)
1 6532 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 6533 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 6534 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 6535 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 6536 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 6537 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 6538 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

3.45 SCOTTISH LIFE HURDLE CHASE

(£3,200; 2m 40yds) (5)
1 6539 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 6540 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 6541 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 6542 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 6543 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

4.20 SCOTIUM HURDLE

(£2,580; 2m 40yds) (8)
1 6544 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 6545 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 6546 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 6547 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 6548 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 6549 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 6550 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 6551 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

4.50 EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY TURF CLUB

JUVENILE HURDLE (4-Y-O; £2,580; 2m) (7)
1 6552 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 6553 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 6554 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 6555 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 6556 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 6557 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 6558 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

5.20 ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND MAIDEN

HURDLE (Div 1: £1,720; 2m) (8)
1 6559 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 6560 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 6561 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 6562 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 6563 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 6564 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 6565 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
8 6566 MANABAR 11 (10,5,5) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: DONCASTER

3.40 Port Vale, 4.20 Hare Comes Herbie, 4.50 Double Agent, 5.20 Far Ahead.

4.50 Double Agent, 5.20 Far Ahead, 5.50 Double Agent, 6.20 Far Ahead.

6.20 Far Ahead, 6.50 Double Agent, 7.20 Far Ahead, 7.50 Double Agent.

7.50 Double Agent, 8.20 Far Ahead, 8.50 Double Agent, 9.20 Far Ahead.

9.20 Far Ahead, 9.50 Double Agent, 10.20 Far Ahead, 10.50 Double Agent.

10.50 Double Agent, 11.20 Far Ahead, 11.50 Double Agent, 12.20 Far Ahead.

12.20 Far Ahead, 12.50 Double Agent, 13.20 Far Ahead, 13.50 Double Agent.

13.50 Double Agent, 14.20 Far Ahead, 14.50 Double Agent, 15.20 Far Ahead.

15.20 Far Ahead, 15.50 Double Agent, 16.20 Far Ahead, 16.50 Double Agent.

16.50 Double Agent, 17.20 Far Ahead, 17.50 Double Agent, 18.20 Far Ahead.

18.20 Far Ahead, 18.50 Double Agent, 19.20 Far Ahead, 19.50 Double Agent.

19.50 Double Agent, 20.20 Far Ahead, 20.50 Double Agent, 21.20 Far Ahead.

21.20 Far Ahead, 21.50 Double Agent, 22.20 Far Ahead, 22.50 Double Agent.

22.50 Double Agent, 23.20 Far Ahead, 23.50 Double Agent, 24.20 Far Ahead.

24.20 Far Ahead, 24.50 Double Agent, 25.20 Far Ahead, 25.50 Double Agent.

25.50 Double Agent, 26.20 Far Ahead, 26.50 Double Agent, 27.20 Far Ahead.

27.20 Far Ahead, 27.50 Double Agent, 28.20 Far Ahead, 28.50 Double Agent.

28.50 Double Agent, 29.20 Far Ahead, 29.50 Double Agent, 30.20 Far Ahead.

30.20 Far Ahead, 30.50 Double Agent, 31.20 Far Ahead, 31.50 Double Agent.

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

THUNDERER
2.00 Souze, 2.30 Bell Staffboy, 3.05 Star Rage, 3.40 Fitzwilliam, 4.15 Noyan, 4.45 Dual Image, 5.15 All Done.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO FIRM IN PLACES) SIS

2.00 OPEN MORNING SELLING HURDLE

(£1,640; 2m 110yds) (20 runners)
1 3128 CULPIN 12 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
2 313 PROUD MARE 9 (10) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
3 314 DAME PROSPECT 7 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
4 315 DREXIN TONG 30 (10) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
5 316 MAGICAL BLUES 22 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
6 317 COUNTRY 302 (10) 10.5 Michael Berran (2)
7 318 DANCER 10 (9) 10.5 Michael Berran (

RUGBY UNION

Northern lights have perfect chance to shine

By David Hands, Rugby Correspondent

THE Pilkington Cup has this season mirrored the FA Cup in that so many fancied teams have already left the scene. There is no Bath, no Wasps, no wealthy Richmond for the quarter-finalists to worry about this weekend; rather, the real possibility of northern clubs occupying two, or even three, of the places in the semi-final draw on Monday.

That situation has not occurred for 20 years. In 1977, Waterloo and Gosforth reached the knockout competition's penultimate stage, Fyfe failing to join them. A year earlier, Gosforth, Sale and Wakefield made the last four and, coincidentally, all three are there again, even if traditionalists scoff at the thought that the Newcastle of today bears much relationship to the Gosforth of yesteryear.

Be that as it may, Newcastle have probably the best opportunity of carrying the northern banner a stage further, even though it is Leicester whom they must overcome. They are at home, they have 12 internationals from four countries available and they play a Leicester side weakened by the loss, through injury, of Eric Miller, Dean Richards and



Dawson: Lion-hearted

Wakefield keen to step forward

David Hands on the upwardly-mobile aspirations of one of Yorkshire's finest

YORKSHIRE is not short of upwardly-mobile rugby clubs. With the arrival of professionalism, the ambition burns among the likes of Leeds, Morley and Harrogate in the third division of the Courage Clubs Championship, and in the second division, where Rotherham and Wakefield sit cheek by jowl.

Rotherham have arrived only recently at this status: Wakefield, by contrast, seem to have been trying to escape it for years, yet seem doomed to failure once more this season with the moneyed clubs occupying both the promotion and the play-off spots.

There is, of course, still the cup. Wakefield stand on the threshold of repeating their feat of 1976, when they reached the semi-finals of the old John Player Cup. Today, they play Gloucester at College Grove in a Pilkington Cup quarter-final and, were they to win, it would be the most timely of victories.

Early next week, Wakefield plan to announce the first stage of a development essential if they are to fight their way into the English game's upper echelon. They have the opportunity to move to a new ground, away from the restricting, and shared, confines of College Grove with its 4,000 capacity, where they can grow and attract sponsorship.

That Wakefield have always been so competitive is remarkable, given their small catchment area of 65,000 and the competition for players. "There are many firms who would be prepared to invest in us if we were on our own," Robin Foster, their vice-chairman, said.

When the Rugby Football Union's (RFU) moratorium on professionalism ended last May, Wakefield handed out contracts to players. "We rushed into signing our squad because we were in danger of

losing a number to our wealthier brethren," Foster said. Like many others, they believed that revenue would become available from television and sponsorship deals — but, with the long-running dispute between the RFU and English Professional Rugby Union Clubs, it did not.

Wakefield's bacon was saved by the private investment of five former players, and though they lost three promising forwards to Leeds, they were able to attract three quality players from Orrell. "We haven't worked our tails off for the last 20 years just to slide backwards," Foster said. "The desire to remain at the top is still there, to take one step further if we can, and it would be magic if, next week, we could publish our hopes for the future on the back of a win over Gloucester."

Wakefield's success this season has come through their back division, where the loyalty of Dave Scully and Mike Jackson at half back has served them well. Five of their players have appeared in the successful North under-21 team this season and one, Dean Hardcastle, was an England replacement in the under-21 international against Scotland last month.

"That's encouraging for us but we do need a bit of timber up front," Foster admitted. Yet his club will relish yet another high-profile cup game: thus far they have beaten Waterloo and Moseley, fellow second-division clubs, so Gloucester gives added focus.

"The cup means a great deal to us because of our previous exploits, we have always enjoyed it," Foster said. Two years ago they beat Gloucester 19-9; a year ago Bath, Slough and all were 45 seconds away from an ignominious defeat; there are no guarantees for visitors to Wakefield.

of the ball will be significant in helping Austin Healey and Joel Stransky to run the match from half back.

If the wind continues to shriek across Kingston Park, control will be at a premium and there are few willed heads in the British game than Rob Andrew and Stransky, the opposing stand-off halves, but that is only one of a series of individual confrontations.

Sale, buoyed by their away league victory over Harlequins earlier this month, return to Northampton, where they lost 30-12 in the league in October. Their nemesis that day was Paul Grayson, who kicked 20 points, and now Grayson is rejoined by Matt Dawson after an absence of nearly 11 weeks, caused by medial ligament damage to the left knee.

Dawson, the England scrum half last season, has enjoyed a distinct upturn in his fortunes this week with his inclusion in the preliminary British Isles squad for the tour to South Africa this summer, though his match fitness will be tested to the full by Dewi Morris.

"I can't do anything about the past three months," Dawson, 24, said. "I know I've missed the five nations, but getting the news about the Lions was good for me. If I carry on playing well, I should be in with a shout."

"If my knee comes through against Dewi, I'll be set up for the rest of the season. I'll be good to come back against someone of that sort of quality; you know where you stand. It won't be an easy ride."

The return of Simon Mannix at stand-off will encourage Sale, whose only doubt is whether Dylan O'Grady will be fit to play on the open side. Andy Morris stands by to cover.

Phil Greening has recovered from a knee injury in time to play for Gloucester, whose status in the first division makes them favourites against Wakefield. Greening, the England replacement hooker, is the only change from the XV beaten by Bristol in the league on Tuesday, a result that should ensure maximum concentration against Wakefield, though Richard Hill, the director of rugby at Kingsholm, admits that the cup has taken second place to league survival.

There will be 17 international players padding through the mud of the Stoop Memorial Ground tomorrow when Harlequins play Saracens, ten of whom will arrive with Saracens. So often the boot has been on the other foot, but, in the past five weeks, Saracens have beaten Harlequins in the league and Wasps in the cup. Admittedly, both games were at Enfield, and winning away from home has not yet become a habit for Saracens, but they will welcome back Kyran Bracken at scrum half after a fortnight spent recovering from a deep haematoma.

If Pontypridd are to sustain their defence of the Swale Cup, they must win the seventh-round tie at Swansea today, where they have not won for 25 years. They must do so, however, without Dale McIntosh, the back-row forward capped by Wales in December, but now suffering from a rib injury. Neil Jenkins reverts to stand-off, his more accustomed position, for Pontypridd, to oppose Arwel Thomas, his national team colleague, whose form has forced Jenkins to play at full back for Wales.

Cardiff keep champagne on ice

Andrew Longmore finds ice hockey's champions short of a suitable stage

It says something for the confidence of Cardiff Devils and the savvy of their marketing staff that, within minutes of winning the inaugural ice hockey Superleague title, T-shirts celebrating the fact were on sale in the Wales national ice rink. For the Devils, a 6-4 victory over Manchester Storm, which brought them the championship with a game to spare, was a welcome return to winning ways. This was the club's fourth championship, but their first for two years. The wait was beginning to lay heavy on a club born only ten years ago but bred on success.

It was just a shame nobody brought the trophy along. For all the inevitable rendering of *We Are The Champions* and the wild scenes of celebration, the players had to make do with their standard issue bottles of Bud rather than supping champagne from a silver cup — an apt comment

SUPERLEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Cardiff	41	29	3	9	105
Sheffield	40	26	4	10	102
Nottingham	41	21	11	9	95
Leeds	40	18	8	14	84
Manchester	40	18	2	20	82
Birmingham	40	13	2	25	59
Reading	40	12	3	25	58

on the first year of the Superleague, which has seen plenty of fizz and a fair amount of froth. The presentation of the trophy will take place tonight before the Devils' final game, against Newcastle Cobras.

That the fall guys for the occasion should be Manchester Storm was appropriate — and not just because their coach, John Lawless, laid the foundations for the Devils' success in the early days. Lawless says ice hockey is "facility led". The Storm have the facility, in the 17,000-capacity Nymex Arena, but not the team. Cardiff have the team, not the facility.

As the players and the head coach, Paul Heavey, moved steadily into a larger-induced haze during a long night of celebration in Grelzky's Bar, thoughts would already have been turning to the future. The club's chief executive, David Temme, and Paul Guy, whose money has helped to bankroll this season's rising wage bill, were both away for the vital night.



Kip Noble leaps into Heavey's arms as Cardiff celebrate their championship

When they return, the development of a new arena will be top of their agenda.

The Wales national ice rink is cosy and, when the mood takes the locals, raucous. It is sold out most weeks, but a capacity of 2,635 will not put food on the table for long, if other clubs match Cardiff by buying in a higher class of import. Heavey, at 34, one of the brightest young coaches in sport, has done his homework on players such as Ken Hodge and Marty Yewchuk, but money talks loudest and it will only be a matter of time before the greater clout of the Steelers in Sheffield and the Storm prevails. A new 10,000-seat facility in Cardiff Bay is planned, but the vision is still somewhat hazy.

In the meantime, the Devils can savour their success and start preparations for the play-offs and, next season, another tilt in Europe. Last time, their run was halted abruptly by a team from Minsk in the semi-finals of the Europa Cup. This time, Heavey feels, his team are wiser and more battle-hardened.

"Our long-term goal is to win a European trophy and I think we're capable of doing that," he said. "This is a tough league. We used to have to raise our game to the highest level for maybe eight to ten games a season, now it's every week. We're looking at a standard comparable with the minor leagues in the US and players who don't make it in the National Hockey League are starting to look to Britain as an alternative."

The rougher, tougher type

ATHLETICS

Rodal can judge form for run at Coe's time

By David Powell, Athletics Correspondent

AFTER staging a run of domestic meetings, in which British honour only has been at issue, the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham opens its doors to the world tomorrow. The venue is hosting the final event on the Ricoh Tour, which carries £210,000 (about £130,000) in prize-money.

The tour is the indoor equivalent of the "golden four" outdoor series — four of the best meetings on the circuit working together with an attractive prize structure. Yet, more than that of any single British athlete, it is the performance of Ian Stewart that matters most this weekend.

This is the first opportunity that the British Athletic Federation has had to lift off the mask of embarrassment that it wore last year when its international meetings were not of the standard that the crowds in Great Britain have come to expect.

Stewart, as the head of the events department, needs a show of outstanding quality to help to convince the public that seats for the BAF's main promotions are still worth buying. The special effects display that the BAF is planning, through music and lighting, to jazz things up, will not, in itself, be enough.

Three Olympic champions dropping out in the past week have left Stewart with only one from an individual event. Gone are Charles Austin and Svetlana Kostadinova, the high jump gold medal-winners from Atlanta, together with Deon Hemmings, the 400-metre hurdler. In, though, is Vebjorn Rodal, whose late inclusion had Stewart buoyant yesterday.

Rodal set an Olympic record of 1min 42.55sec for 800 metres when he became Norway's first track field champion for 40 years in Atlanta last year, prompting a revision of the presumption that Wilson Kipketer would be the one to break Sebastian Coe's long-standing world record. Either could take it this summer and, to emphasise the point, Rodal will seek to lower the indoor record, held by Paul Ereng, tomorrow.

Ereng's record may not be of such old cloth as Coe's, but neither is it from the nearly new shop. Set in 1989, Ereng recorded 1min 44.84sec the year after winning the Olympic title in Seoul. Rodal has asked for a pacemaker to reach 600 metres in 77sec — 1min 43sec pace.

Pacemakers of quality are rare and, as of yesterday afternoon, Stewart has not found one who is ideal. He said yesterday: "We have got people, but finding one who can run that fast is not easy. I have got Peter Stubbs with me and he reckons he can do 78sec, but I am not so sure. Ideally, we need somebody who can run 77sec even." Birmingham slipped from third to fifth in the International Amateur Athletic Federation indoor evaluations last year, but Stewart said of tomorrow: "It is going to be as good as anything we have put on indoors. The depth is tremendous. We have got Ivan Pedrosa and five other [long] jumpers over eight metres this season. We have got probably the best 60 metres on the circuit this year. Big names could go out in the heats."

That event includes Ato Boldon, the Olympic 100 and 200 metres bronze medal-winner, from Trinidad, Bruny Surin, from Canada, who will be seeking his third successive 60 metres world title in Paris next month, and Jon Drummond and Dennis Mitchell, two of the fastest Americans.

GOLF: ELEMENTS PLAY TRICKS ON COMPETITORS IN PRESIDENT'S PUTTER

Amateurs' best efforts blown awry

By John Hopkins, Golf Correspondent

FOR anyone in search of peace and tranquillity, the tee of the short 5th hole at Rye Golf Club was not the place to be on a doleful February day. Buffeted by 40mph winds, competitor after competitor in the President's Putter found the words that came to mind were not those inscribed on the wooden seat at the back of the tee — "From the Rugby International Golfing Society 1961" — but rather a modification of that famous hymn, "For those in peril on the sea".

The sides of the 5th green fell away. It has a ridge in it so that the right side is lower than the left and is set at an angle from the tee. In a south wind, the best line is well left, towards Cherbourg. Those attempting to play this hole on

such a day were reminded of Bernard Darwin's remark that "the most difficult shots in golf are the second shots to the short holes at Rye".

Though for many the green was unwelcoming and hostile, for Nick Burke it was the place of a minor triumph. His teeshot finished to the left of the

Results from Rye — 51

green, down a bank 15 feet below the putting surface. It could scarcely have been in a worse place. From such a position, even the most gifted professional would have been pressed to keep his ball on the putting surface.

Burke chose to putt. He judged the steepness of the bank to perfection so that his ball just struggled to the top

with its last turn and then was taken down on to the green by the contours of the surface. It rolled to within eight feet of the flag. Such skill was of no use in the end.

He was beaten 2 and 1 by Tim Hanson, who, in his morning match against Peter Cooper, had watched as Cooper's ball was blown several feet on the 5th green. "As he took his putter back the ball went with it," Hanson said. "I couldn't believe my eyes. I thought I was watching something out of David Copperfield."

After two victories, Ted Dexter's story of the 5th went like this. "I was on the high side of the green and my first putt started well left, turned and rolled down past the hole and on and on. I hit my second putt up the hill and it got to within six inches then began to trickle

back and it ended at my feet again." Tony Murley, Dexter's opponent, took up the story: "I was about to bend down and concede Ted's second putt when it started to move again. It ended up further away in three than he had been in two. In the end, we halved the hole in five."

When professional golfers complain about bad weather or poorly cut greens, it is days such as yesterday and incidents such as these that come to mind. The amateurs of the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society help to keep it all in perspective.

Peter Leonard shrugged off the distractions of his victory in the Australian Masters in Melbourne last weekend to lead with four others on seven under par after two rounds of the Canon Challenge in Sydney yesterday.

SNOOKER

Drago wins war of nerves

By Phil Yates

TONY DRAGO, a bundle of often uncontrolled nervous energy, made his debut in the semi-finals of a world ranking tournament a winning one by edging John Higgins, the title-holder, 6-5 in an enthralling contest at the International Open in Aberdeen yesterday.

Higgins, undefeated in five previous meetings with Drago and in 17 matches during an event that he was aiming to win for a third successive year, was confidently expected to protect his record on both counts, but did not play anywhere near his best.

Breaks of 57 and 106 gave Drago, from Malta, a 2-1 lead and he recovered from a 46-0 deficit in the eighth frame with a 67 clearance to brown to

move 5-3 ahead. Holding a 64-6 advantage at an advanced stage of the ninth frame, Drago had one foot and four toes in the final.

Drago squandered an opportunity to wrap up proceedings, however, and Higgins, who rallied from 6-0 down to pip him 9-8 in the last 16 of the United Kingdom championship three months ago, refused to relinquish his grip on the trophy.

Higgins made a 71 clearance to seal the frame on the black, and won a fraught tenth by clipping the pink to a top pocket. At that point, given Drago's propensity to crack in such circumstances, Higgins was rightly considered an overwhelming favourite, and

there was certainly no denying Drago's growing nervousness. Unable to sit still in his chair while Higgins was at the table, he resembled an expectant father pacing the maternity ward. Yet Drago retained his composure with a 59 break in the deciding frame to secure at least £32,000. "I knew I had guts, but not that much," Drago said. "I'm the happiest man in the world."

The elimination of Higgins afforded Stephen Hendry, the 5-2 quarter-final conqueror of Jimmy White on Thursday, the chance to further tighten his grip on top spot in the provisional world rankings.

NEWS: The quarter-finalists: Higgins (Scott) at A. McManus (Scott) 5-2; S. Hendry (Scott) at J. White (Eng) 5-2. Semi-final: A. Drago (Malta) at Higgins 6-5.

HOCKEY

Barrett homes in on Teddington repeat

TWO seasons ago Andy Bilson saved Teddington from defeat against High Wycombe with a late equaliser that took a Hockey Association Cup match to penalty strokes (Sydney Friskin writes). Teddington won the shoot-out but now face another contest with the same club in the fifth round of the cup tomorrow.

However, John Barrett, the Teddington assistant coach, is certain that the pattern of the 5-2 quarter-final conqueror of Jimmy White on Thursday, the chance to further tighten his grip on top spot in the provisional world rankings.

NEWS: The quarter-finalists: Higgins (Scott) at A. McManus (Scott) 5-2; S. Hendry (Scott) at J. White (Eng) 5-2. Semi-final: A. Drago (Malta) at Higgins 6-5.

Montgomerie tempted by US

By Mel Webb

NICK FALDO gave a broad hint yesterday that Colin Montgomerie was thinking seriously of following his example in playing an increasing amount in the United States.

Faldo decided to play full-time on the US PGA Tour two years ago and was rewarded with his third victory in the US Masters — his sixth Major title win — last April.

Montgomerie, yet to win a Major, has resisted the temptation to play more in the US, insisting that European tournament golf is as competitive as any. This year, however, he has decided to prepare for Augusta with seven weeks' competition in the United States, and will leave after

defending his Dubai Desert Classic title next week.

"I'm sure that Monty is tinkering with coming over here," Faldo said. "He enjoys European life, but he also enjoys playing courses in good condition. If he is going to be here for seven weeks, he is going to get a really good picture of what life on the US Tour is like."

Faldo, who will be going for his fourth Masters title in nine years, said that there were no signs that Europe's domination of the event — eight wins in the last decade — was coming to an end and added that, despite an indifferent record at Augusta, Montgomerie was capable of making the breakthrough. "Monty

might be the next man to keep the European cycle going," he said.

The burden of expectation on Montgomerie in Europe is mirrored by the pressure being imposed in the United States on Tiger Woods. "I don't think the attention Tiger is getting will affect him too much," Faldo said.

FA course record 63 from David Frost led the way on a day of low-scoring in the second round of the Alfred Dunhill PGA at Houghton Golf Club near Johannesburg yesterday. Retief Goosen leads on 13-under 131. He has a one-shot lead over Frost, his fellow South African, and the first-round leader, Thomas Gögele, of Germany.

CRICKET: PLAYERS RESPONDING TO MODERN GAME AND METHODS OF PREPARATION

England dance to different tune

FROM ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
IN AUCKLAND

EVEN the most curmudgeonly of observers must concede that there is a strikingly noteworthy aspect of England's recent cricket. It is not just that they are winning games, it is that the players — including those of distinctly unathletic build and gait — look strong, fit and agile.

Already, one can sense a groan of scepticism from the armchairs of the traditionalists, where fitness regimes have never been well received. Cricketers, so they maintain, should get fit by playing cricket, just as they always used to do.

This edict, however, applied to another generation, virtually another game. The cricketers of today have so many more questions asked of mind and body than did their predecessors. Only they, three months into a tour covering two countries, know what it is to encounter a string of limited-overs games, with their excessive demands on physical well-being, at a time when mental energy and motivation are at a premium. They are doing so now, with a second

game of five scheduled for tomorrow at Eden Park.

England have been shamefully slow to recognise the needs of the modern game. This is the first tour on which two experts have catered for the players' physical welfare, but the belated acknowledgement is having its reward — visibly, in the case of unrecognisable fielding and catching standards, and less tangibly in the improved levels of stamina to concentrate through a taxing day.

Wayne Morton, the England physiotherapist, has been waging war on reactionary philosophies since he came into cricket 13 years ago. "To acquire fitness requires toughness, preparation and attitude," he said, "and in cricket there is a constant battle against long tradition and resistance. But I struggle far less with the players of today and more with the people who used to play."

"When I started out in cricket, the attitudes to fitness were antiquated. We still lag behind other countries, and because I am fighting a corner it seems to me that changes are not happening fast enough. To a traditionalist, it is probably moving too fast."

It was the idea of Morton, a Yorkshireman, to spread the workload by recruiting a specialist trainer. "Fitness in cricket had always been the province of the physios, but I increasingly found myself dragged in two directions and that we also needed a different input. I knew there was a role for a fitness expert — I just had to persuade the [Test and County Cricket] Board."

Morton won his point and Dean Riddle, ironically a New

Surrey jazz up Sundays — 1

Zealand, was recruited. Riddle had spent ten years training rugby league teams, the past seven in England, and has found little difficulty adapting his methods.

We spoke towards the end of the Christchurch Test. Riddle had just taken three of the unemployed players for a session of swimming and "water-based running". At close of play, others would be identified for shuttle runs on the outfield. Morton grinned mischievously: "Dean gets all the abuse from them now. I'm the good guy again."

"Cricketers are human and

training often seems an unpleasant thing to do. We cannot expect to impose concepts and change things overnight but, in a few years' time, every new player will accept these routines as the norm."

Morton and Riddle have devised some training games that, to an outsider, seem irrelevant, even infantile. Yet the noisy, hyperactive routines, one of them a kind of basketball played with a tennis ball, all have their purpose. "It is for agility, for the reflexes, for hand-eye co-ordination and for player communication," Riddle said.

"Equally, we may give them a game that has no special relevance other than to warm them up in a way they find interesting. Variety is the key — we constantly change the formulas to keep them thinking and so they don't know how much they are doing. It would be hard, for instance, to get a player to do 20 40-metre sprints straight off, but play football for half an hour and he will probably do 60."

Both men speak of diet, of energy levels and of their aim to create a national fitness database so that cricketers can constantly be assessed. But they relate to the players' own

vocabulary when Morton says: "There is an intensity and aggressiveness in Test cricket now and, when you come up against a very physical, powerful side like South Africa, it can be intimidating."

In this, he is getting through to the players and perhaps the mark of the fitness men's success on this tour has been the response of two unlikely candidates, Robert Croft and Philip Tufnell.

"Croft is a dumpy little Welshman," Morton said, "but he believes his fitness levels have made him stronger in his bowling, given him more presence at the crease. As for Tufnell, well, he'll never be Carl Lewis but he has reacted well." Tufnell, indeed, has been going regularly to the gym without persuasion. His fielding has benefited enormously and the direct-hit run-out he effected in the Christchurch Test was a sweet moment for his trainers.

While Morton, an integral part of this team and its culture, sees out the tour, Riddle has returned home. Already, however, he has signed a contract for the tour to West Indies next winter, which can only be good news for England's cricket.



Croft and Tufnell enjoy the success their improved levels of fitness has helped them to achieve

Jury still out after Kray funds appeal

ASHFIELD 95, a football club from Kirkby in Nottinghamshire, has appointed a new president — Reggie Kray. Now 63 and jailed for 30 years for the murder of Jack "The Hat" McVitie and being accessory to the murder of George Cornell, Kray has contributed £1,000 to Ashfield 95.

He issued his first statement as president from Maidstone prison: "I am very pleased the team has honoured me in this way. I have always had a soft spot for Nottinghamshire since I spent a few years in Nottingham prison. The people are really friendly and Nottingham is my second favourite city after London."

For some reason, not every one is ecstatic about this appointment. Mick Kilbee, assistant secretary to the Nottinghamshire FA, said: "We have written to the club asking them to explain the situation in writing. Meanwhile, we are reserving judgment until we hear from them."

Ashfield wrote to Kray after a number of others had turned down their request for money, which they want to help them find a better ground. The Prince's Trust rejected them; Kray did not.

Take five

The willow is covered in pussies and the song of the song thrush echoes through the land. Can the third sign of spring be far behind? No: this column's annual *Wisden* competition is with us once again. All you have to do is work out who the editor, Matthew Engel, has selected as the five *Wisden* cricketers of the year.

The *Wisden* award traditionally goes to the five players who have illuminated the English season of the previous summer: a player can only win it once. However, there is something rum going on this year. Engel dropped one of his subtle hints: "Remember that the selection of the cricketers, and even the criteria by which he selects them, are entirely a matter of the editor's judgment." Engel may have played a wild card this year.

A copy of *Wisden 1997* goes to the five entries closest to Engel's selection: I am the sole judge of proximity. Entries may reach me by March 10.

The biters bit

Bandits held up a car near Warsaw, in Poland, and were set to rob the occupants, Konstin Valgin and Gemady Remensky. But help was at hand. The two men are coaches to the biathlon teams of Russia and Belarus, and they were returning from the world championships in Slovakia.

Biathlon? Yes, the event that combines skiing and marksmanship — and the two teams were travelling behind. The four highwaymen found themselves surrounded by two dozen men armed with rifles. Wisely, they surrendered.

Pulling together

As everyone knows, the world indoor tug-of-war championship is taking place this week at the Torbay Leisure Centre. Tug-of-war is one of the most ancient of all sports: there is a wall engraving of competing tug-of-warriors in an Egyptian tomb, dated at 2500 BC.

SIMON BARNES



On Saturday

England already has two gold medals at the championships and is fancied for two more today at the event, sponsored by Taylor Woodrow. The international federation is making a quixotic attempt at getting the sport back into the Olympics. It was last contested in 1920. Britain won gold, silver and bronze in the tug-of-war in the 1908 London Olympics; the gold medal-winning team from the Metropolitan Police went back to work for the afternoon.

□ Marcos Martin, playing football for Sevilla against Tenerife last Sunday, was injured and taken off the field on a golf buggy. Alas, the driver drove rather too close to the goal — and whacked Martin's head on a post as he whizzed past. He has since recovered from both injuries.



Appealing Bell

Goalkeeper of the week is Joseph Antoine Bell of the Cameroon squads that contested the World Cup finals in 1990 and 1994. He has all but succeeded in getting paid for his participation in 1990.

Bell took the case to Fifa, who ordered the Cameroon FA to cough up the money he is owed. All the other members of the squad have long since given up the attempt at getting their money.

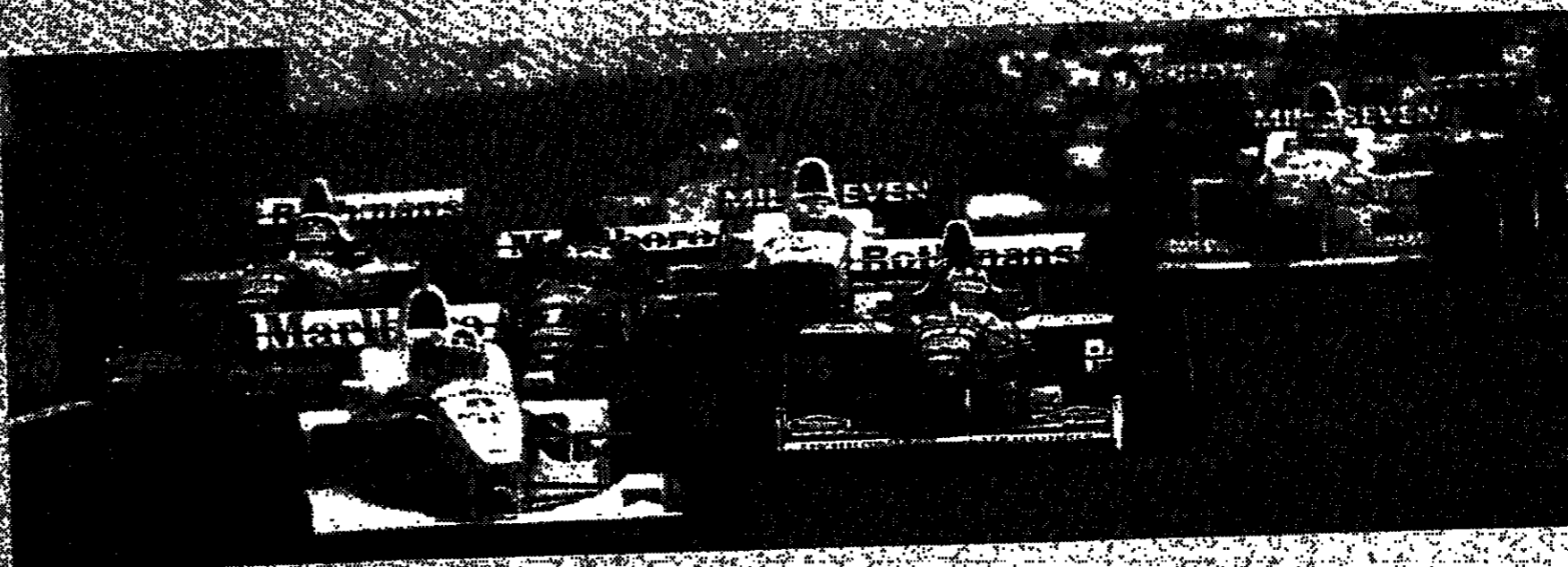
Bell did not actually play in 1990; he was dropped after a dispute with officials about when he was going to get paid. He played two games in 1994, but was dropped after his leading part in a threatened strike — about payment.

I wonder if he has been paid for the 1994 World Cup yet. Fifa said Cameroon would be suspended from international competition if they did not pay up. Vincent Onana, president of the Cameroon FA, said: "Cameroon cannot be suspended. Cameroon is credible, but to say that Bell will be paid as soon as possible is not comprehensive."

10p

THE TIMES

ON MONDAY, A GUIDE TO THE LATEST TRAFFIC CONGESTION.



On Monday's 10p Times, see the free 20-page Grand Prix '97 guide. There's a preview of the new Formula 1 season, including a look at the teams, drivers and up and coming stars. There's also the chance to play Fantasy Formula 1 and win Michael Schumacher's pocket money — that's £25,000.

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CHANGING TIMES

هكذا من لاصح

THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP THIS WEEKEND

ARSENAL

How long can Arsène Wenger, the manager, continue in his strange state of denial? Obviously defending his players' excesses on the field has its own merits. The fact is that Arsenal's prospects this season in league and cup have been severely damaged by the rash of suspensions. Far better educated and more sophisticated than the average manager, it is surely in his own and Arsenal's interest for Wenger to come down heavily on offenders, rather than try to excuse them. BG

ASTON VILLA

Thou shalt not make fun of the physiotherapist... as Mark Draper, the Villa midfielder player, has found to his cost. Draper thought that his past jesting with Jim Walker, the Villa Park spongerman, had been forgotten until he began his rehabilitation from a hernia operation. Running, running and then more running was prescribed for the breathless Draper, prompting him to muse: "I used to wonder why Jim never came in for a lot of banter. Now I know." RK

BLACKBURN ROVERS

Robert Coar, the chairman, would surely prove useful to the Government in the disinformation department. His assurances that Sven Göran Eriksson really was still coming to the club were just the latest. Ray Harford began to get edgy when Coar said he wasn't leaving, and big money was pumped on Alan Shearer joining Newcastle when Coar said that he was going nowhere. Coar even said that Eriksson wasn't a target, two days before he was named as the new manager. DM

CHELSEA

Manchester United are probably too proud to mark Gianfranco Zola, which could give Chelsea a chance, and Mark Hughes will be keen to score against his old club. Roy Keane, in the United midfield, will be hard to contain on present form, but so too will Roberto di Matteo, who insists that he wants to stay in London. Where United may have the edge is in goal, where Schmeichel — as at Highbury in midweek — dominates but Chelsea tend to falter. BG

COVENTRY CITY

Coventry versus Everton at Highfield Road this afternoon does not exactly whet the appetite. Only the most committed need attend a Premiership fixture of dubious potential. Still, the return of Dion Dublin from his seven-match suspension at least adds a smidgen of intrigue. Will Gordon Strachan, the Coventry manager, use Dublin in central defence, his recent role, or as a central striker, his preferred role? Peter Ndlovu, his often absent teammate, may be back, too. RK

DERBY COUNTY

Jim Smith has learnt a few tricks during his years in management, and one is to know when to put the frighteners on his players. Having gone without a league win since November, Smith took them to a haunted house in Stratford-upon-Avon. "There were trapdoors everywhere, and some of the lads slept with the lights on," Gary Rowett, the central defender, said. The result? Four points from two games since, and much more spirit in the camp. RH

EVERTON

With Mark Schwarzer turning them down, and Neville Southall looking to go into management, Everton are suddenly in need of a goalkeeper. And not just a goalkeeper. "We've done the hard part in weeding out the squad," Joe Royle, the manager, said, "but we want to bring in two, or maybe three, top-class players." Today they await a fitness test on Duncan Ferguson, who has a hamstring problem, and Craig Short. Marc Hottelger is out, with Michael Ball coming into the squad. PB

LEEDS UNITED

After conceding seven goals in two games, it is back to the drawing board for George Graham, the manager, as Leeds visit Sunderland, a club with a defensive record to make Graham envious. Graham is trying with the idea of abandoning the wing-back formation, and reverting to the tried and tested. "Manchester United and Blackburn have won the championship playing 4-4-2," Graham said, "and United still are, so it looks as if all the successful teams play 4-4-2." PB

LEICESTER CITY

Back to square one. After restoring the balance of his side by signing Robert Ullathorne, a left-sided midfielder player, on Monday, Martin O'Neill, the manager, could only reflect on the game's cruelties when Ullathorne broke an ankle 11 minutes into his debut against Wimbledon 24 hours later. He is out for the season, and with Whitlow still missing, there will be a distinctly right-footed look to the side against Derby County today. Heskey, Izet, Lennon, and Elliott are all suspended. RH

LIVERPOOL

Stuart Collymore has scored on his last five starts, but no one at Liverpool is apparently closer to understanding his complex character. Collymore did not train yesterday, complaining of feeling poorly, but at least he did turn up. While there are many unanswered questions about the club's most expensive signing, there is no doubt he has great talent. "He could become one of the best players in this country, possibly in Europe, if he gets his mind right," John Barnes said yesterday. DM

MANCHESTER UNITED

After the bitter encounter at Highbury, United were still counting their bruises yesterday. "There are a few bruises and strains which we have to check on," Alex Ferguson, the manager, said, "but Pally [Gary Pallister] is the only concern." If he is ruled out, David May will step back in. Nicky Butt is out for up to six weeks, and Eric Cantona is still suspended, leaving Cole and Solskjær to continue the partnership that was so effective against Arsenal. PB

MIDDLESBROUGH

Bryan Robson, the manager, is close to completing the £1.25 million signing of Mark Schwarzer, Bradford City's 24-year-old Australia goalkeeper. Schwarzer has played just 16 games for Bradford since arriving from Kaiserslautern, of Germany, for £350,000 in November. Meanwhile Juninho faces Newcastle in the Ties-Tyne derby at the Riverside today before flying out to Brazil for an international against Poland next week. Emerson is suspended, while Whyte is injured.

NEWCASTLE UNITED

He is described as Mr Miserable, but Kenny Dalglish, the manager, can display a cutting humour. Asked yesterday if he thought the Premiership contest is now a two-horse race, his response was telling. "Who else is in it with us?" he smiled. He will soon have Newcastle winning consistently, and if they should record victory in the match they have in hand over the top two clubs, then they would be only five points adrift. It is a significant gap, but not impossible to bridge. DM

NOTTINGHAM FOREST

With Stuart Pearce scowling menacingly around the City Ground corridors since the FA Cup ignominy at Chesterfield, there seems little chance of a repeat performance when Forest resume league duties against Aston Villa today. Better times appear to be ahead for the manager. The takeover should be resolved — not before time — on Monday night, while Steve Stone takes the next step in his recovery from a long-term knee injury when he begins jogging later in the week. RH

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

David Pleat, the manager, was not a happy man this week, despite a rather important FA Cup victory at Bradford. It was Chris Waddle, a former player, who raised his hackles, with comments comparing Wednesday to Wimbledon. "Obviously whoever said that doesn't know too much about football," he said. "We have a different system, so it is a ridiculous comparison. Maybe it was a compliment, because Wimbledon are passing the ball around well, just like us." DM

SUNDERLAND

The encounter with Leeds today at Roker Park evokes memories of the 1973 FA Cup Final, which Sunderland won 1-0, courtesy of Ian Porterfield's goal and Jim Montgomery's superb double save. The latest temporary newcomers at Sunderland are two Danes, Rens Pedersen and Kim Heisterberg. While Sam Alston, the promising young winger, is gaining match practice on loan at Chester, Peter Reid, the manager, is casting covetous eyes at Grimsby's teenage left winger, John Ooster.

HOW THEY STAND

	Pts	Goal diff	Last five games
1. Manchester United	26	+23	WWW
2. Liverpool	26	+26	LWWW
3. Arsenal	27	+20	WWDL
4. Newcastle	25	+20	WWWW
5. Chelsea	26	+8	DLWW
6. Chelsea	24	+5	DWLWW
7. Wimbledon	23	+8	WLWL
8. Sheffield Wednesday	25	-1	LDWL
9. Tottenham	25	-6	LDWL
10. Everton	25	-4	LLDL
11. Leeds	26	-10	LDWL
12. Southampton	25	-10	LDWL
13. Sunderland	25	-9	LDWL
14. Blackburn	24	-11	LDWL
15. Leicester	24	-10	LDWL
16. Coventry	25	-11	LDWL
17. Nottingham Forest	25	-12	LDWL
18. West Ham	25	-13	LDWL
19. Southampton	23	-14	LDWL
20. Middlesbrough	24	-15	LDWL

SOUTHAMPTON

Benadi is suspended, Matthew Oakley is doubtful, and bids by Graeme Souness, the manager, for Carl Serrant, the Oldham Athletic left back, and Steve Harkness, the Liverpool defender, have been turned down. Looking on the bright side, Southampton have games in hand on their rivals at the foot of the Premiership. Ray Clemence has joined the club as part-time goalkeeping adviser. Jason Dodd could return, and a certain England international may feel he has a point to prove. NS

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

Tony Lenaghan, Tottenham's overworked and presumably underpaid physiotherapist, has been receiving assistance from an unlikely source in recent weeks. Two health experts from Holland were airlifted in to the club's Chigwell training ground to help nurse the walking and hobbling, wounded back to fitness. "It got a bit too much for Tony and his staff," Gerry Francis, the Tottenham manager, said. "He needed a few extra hands and the Dutch guys have done a good job." RK

WEST HAM UNITED

If only points were as easy to accumulate as pounds. Inside 24 hours West Ham have raised £1.6 million through a share issue that values the club at £30 million, and "saved" £1.5 million on the purchase of John Hartson. "We only paid £3.5 million," Harry Redknapp, the manager, said. The customary add-ons are such that, for the deal to be worth the reported £5 million, "we would have to win the Champions' League next year and I would have to score the winning goal." KP

WIMBLEDON

The Football Association of Ireland are still talking the "Dublin Dons" stories seriously enough to secure the backing of Fifa and Uefa for their opposition to the plan. In the real world, a Wimbledon victory at Arsenal tomorrow, where they are unbeaten in eight visits, would make them outright leaders of the capital's unofficial championship, based on games between London clubs rather than league position. Neither they nor their opponents have lost a derby this season. NS

Reports: Brian Glavin, Peter Ball, Russell Kempson, Richard Hobson, Nick Szczepanik, Keith Piles, David Maddock. Statistics: Julian Deabrough

CHELSEA v MANCHESTER UNITED

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-1, 1-2, 1-0, 3-2, 1-3, 1-1, 0-2, 1-4

HOW THEY LINE UP

CHELSEA (from): K. Hitchcock, F. Grodzis, D. Petrescu, E. Newton, F. Leboeuf, E. Johnson, F. Sinclair, S. Clarke, A. Myers, R. di Matteo, S. Minto, J. Morris, R. Gullit, D. Wise, P. Hughes, M. Nichols, G. Zola, G. Vialli, M. Hughes.

MANCHESTER UNITED (from): P. Schmeichel, G. Neville, G. Pallister, R. Johnson, D. Irwin, K. Poborsky, D. Beckham, R. Keane, R. Giggs, A. Cole, O. G. Solskjær, P. Neville, G. May, B. McClair, J. Cruyff, R. van der Gouw.

COVENTRY CITY v EVERTON

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-1, 1-2, 0-1, 2-0, 2-1, 0-1, 2-1, 0-0, 2-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

COVENTRY CITY (from): S. Ogrizovic, R. Shaw, G. Brown, P. Williams, M. Hall, P. Taylor, K. Richardson, E. Jess, G. McAllister, N. Whelan, D. Huckerby, D. Dublin, P. Ndlovu, B. Borrows, A. Evtushok, G. Strachan, W. Boland, J. Folan.

EVERTON (from): P. Gerrard, E. Barrett, T. Phelan, D. Unsworth, D. Watson, C. Short, G. Stuart, G. Speed, N. Barry, G. Allan, M. Branch, D. Ferguson, C. Thompson, N. Southall, P. Riecke, M. Bell.

LEICESTER CITY v DERBY COUNTY

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-2, 3-2, 3-3, 0-0

HOW THEY LINE UP

LEICESTER CITY (from): K. Koller, J. Lawrence, S. Prior, S. Grayson, F. Collins, J. Wells, S. Walsh, S. Taylor, S. Campbell, S. Wilson, J. Marshall, M. Roberts, S. Clackie, K. Poole.

DERBY COUNTY (from): R. Houl, G. Rowett, P. McGrath, I. Stamat, L. Casley, P. Trolove, C. Powell, C. Dally, A. Asanovic, D. Sturridge, A. Ward, P. Simpson, S. Flynn, J. Laurence, M. Taylor, M. Reimberg.

LIVERPOOL v BLACKBURN ROVERS

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-1, 0-1, 2-1, 3-0

HOW THEY LINE UP

LIVERPOOL (from): D. James, D. Matteo, S. Barmby, J. McAlister, M. Wright, N. Ruddock, P. Babo, J. Barnes, S. McManis, M. Thomas, J. Redknapp, S. Collymore, R. Fowler, J. Carragher, M. Kennedy, A. Warner, P. Sanger, S. Kwame.

BLACKBURN ROVERS (from): T. Flowers, H. Berg, J. Kenna, C. Hendry, G. Lewis, T. Sherwood, G. Peacock, W. McKinlay, J. Wilcock, C. Sutton, K. Gallacher, G. Doris, S. Giver, P. Warburton, L. Bohinen, N. Gudmundsson, N. Marier, G. Croft, P. Pedersen.

MIDDLESBROUGH v NEWCASTLE UNITED

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-1, 4-1, 3-0, 3-0, 1-2

HOW THEY LINE UP

MIDDLESBROUGH (from): B. Roberts, N. Cox, S. Vickers, G. Festa, C. Fleming, C. Mignatt, P. Stamp, R. Mustoe, A. Moore, P. Fenech, J. Marino, M. Black.

NEWCASTLE UNITED (from): S. Heskey, W. Berton, J. Barnard, D. Batty, D. Peacock, R. Lee, P. Beardsley, A. Shearer, L. Ferdinand, F. Asprilla, R. Elliot, D. Gonda, K. Gillespie, S. Watson, L. Clark, P. Albert.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST v ASTON VILLA

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 5-0, 4-0, 1-2, 2-2, 0-1, 1-2, 1-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from): M. Crossley, A. Fells, D. Lytle, A. Hasting, C. Cooper, S. Christie, D. Pelly, C. Best-Williams, S. Gerrard, C. Allen, J. Wilson, K. Campbell, D. Sanderson, P. McGregor, B. Roy, W. Warner, S. Besterwick.

ASTON VILLA (from): M. Bosnich, F. Nelson, A. Wright, U. Ebiogu, S. Stanton, G. Southgate, I. Taylor, M. Draper, A. Townsend, D. Yorke, S. McCoskie, Substitutes: T. Johnson, J. Joshi, C. Tiler, R. Scamea, M. Oakes.

SOUTHAMPTON v SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-1, 1-1, 1-2, 2-2, 0-1, 1-2, 1-1, 0-0, 0-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

SOUTHAMPTON (from): M. Taylor, R. Maddison, K. Monk, R. Dryden, E. Bertone, A. Nelson, J. Magilton, J. Dodd, S. Crighton, M. Le Tissier, E. Oatensted, S. Bestman, M. Oakley, D. Bassant, D. Hughes, R. Slater, U. van Gobbel.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from): K. Freeman, S. Nisro, I. Nolan, D. Walker, J. Newsome, P. Atkinson, M. Pennington, W. Collins, R. Humphreys, B. Carbone, A. Booth, D. Hirst, R. Binkley, M. Clarke, D. Stellanovic, O. Donaldson, L. Briscoe.

SUNDERLAND v LEEDS UNITED

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-1, 2-1, 0-1, 0-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

SUNDERLAND (from): L. Perez, D. Kubicki, G. Hall, M. Scott, P. Brizzwell, K. Ball, A. Melville, G. Ord, S. Agnew, D. Kelly, C. Russell, M. Gray, M. Bridges, M. Smith, A. Rice, J. Hutton, J. Elliott, D. Williams, P. Heddergham.

LEEDS UNITED (from): N. Merlyn, G. Kelly, A. Dorogi, C. Palmer, L. Riecke, G. Hall, R. Mole, L. Bowyer, M. Jackson, B. Deane, R. Wallace, A. Yabuchi, I. Rutz, J. Harte, D. Welford, M. Boney.

LEADING SCORERS

20: A. Shearer (Newcastle), 17: I. Wright (Arsenal), 14: D. Yorke (Aston Villa), 13: R. Fowler (Liverpool), 12: O. G. Solskjær (Manchester United), L. Ferdinand (Newcastle United), 10: C. Sutton (Blackburn), S. Collymore (Liverpool), F. Bennett (Middlesbrough), M. Le Tissier (Southampton), S. E. Skov (Wimbledon), S. G. Vialli (Chelsea), D. Dublin (Coventry), E. Cantona (Manchester United), M. Gayle (Wimbledon).

CHAMPIONSHIP BETTING

8-11: Manchester United; 11-14: Liverpool; 14-17: Newcastle United; 17-21: Arsenal; 21-25: Chelsea; 25-30: Aston Villa; 30-35: Wimbledon. Odds supplied by Ladbrokes.

The official internet site of the FA Premier League is at <http://www.fapremier.com/>

ARSENAL v WIMBLEDON

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 3-1, 3-0, 2-0, 2-2, 1-1, 0-1, 1-1, 0-0, 1-3

HOW THEY LINE UP

ARSENAL (from): J. Lukic, L. Dixon, A. Adams, P. Vela, M. Keown, S. Bold, N. Winstanley, R. Pardo, P. Merson, D. Bergkamp, J. Wright, M. Rice, R. Garcia, S. Marshall, S. Morrow, L. Harper, P. Shaw, S. Hughes, A. Clarke, G. McGowan.

WIMBLEDON (from): N. Sullivan, K. Cunningham, A. Kimble, D. Blackwell, C. Parny, Y. Jones, O. Lashford, R. Earle, E. Eboke, M. Gayle, J. Goodman, D. Holdsworth, N. Ardley, M. Harford, D. Jupp, S. McAllister, B. Murphy.

WEST HAM UNITED v TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-1, 0-1, 0-2, 1-1, 1-3, 1-2, 1-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

WEST HAM UNITED (from): L. Miszkow, T. Breacher, S. Potts, M. Rasper, K. Rowland, J. Dicks, R. Ferdinand, P. Wilton, J. Harrison, P. Wilson, I. Bishop, H. Fortino, I. Dowle, F. Lampard, L. Soley, M. Bowen, S. Ledwith.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (from): I. Walker, S. Campbell, C. Caldwell, C. Wilson, D. Howells, D. Anderson, R. Fox, S. Sheringham, A. Sinton, R. Rosenzweig, S. Carr, J. Edinburgh, E. Beardsley, A. Nielsen, D. Hill, R. Allen, J. Scales, D. Austin.

WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION

Today: BBC1, 10.50pm Match of the Day

Tomorrow: 11am Sky Sports Goals on Sunday

4pm Sky Sports Arsenal v Wimbledon (live)

7pm Sky Sports West Ham United v Tottenham Hotspur (live)

RACING 46, 47

Nicholson deals up strong hand for Racing Post Chase

SPORT

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22 1997

RUGBY UNION 46

Dawson returns to centre stage in Pilkington Cup

Shake hands for good of the game

Rob Hughes, football correspondent, on why Wright and Schmeichel must bury the hatchet in a public reconciliation

FOR the better part of an hour at Highbury on Wednesday, football was enriched by a spectacle of ball-control beyond anyone's expectations in gale-force conditions.

By the end of the night, that enrichment was contaminated by irresponsible behaviour by Ian Wright; and from then until today, instead of just a game, the affair has disintegrated into a question of racism that, in the present climate of the country, is dangerous beyond the emotions of sport.

Wright appeared on television on Thursday night to disclaim any culpability. "I did nothing wrong," he insisted. "He [Peter Schmeichel, the Manchester United goalkeeper, whose leg might have been broken by Wright's horrendous two-footed tackle] is my fellow pro and I'm not going to say I want anything to happen to him."

So, the Arsenal idol, Wright, insists that he made no complaint about an alleged racist remark

from Schmeichel when they last met and rowed in public at Old Trafford in November, insists that he won the ball with his tackle, insists that nothing untoward happened in the tunnel at the end of the Premiership game on Wednesday. The television pictures, the still photographs — showing not only the destructive nature of Wright's tackle, but the bitter dislike of these two professional performers for one another — and the evidence of police intervention in the tunnel are then, all bogus.

This is a sickening ramification of bad blood that has festered between United and Arsenal for a decade. It spilt over into a mass brawl involving 21 players in 1990; clearly too few people learnt from the fines of £50,000 imposed on each club and the deduction of points. And, apart from Gordon Taylor, the chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA), no one has acted

swiftly between Wednesday night and Saturday morning to try to take responsibility, to acknowledge that something has to be done and quickly if the national sport is to maintain its integrity.

Football, perhaps more than any other single activity, can bring harmony between the races. The sight of Schmeichel, big and blond and Danish, verbally bullying those around him, including some of his own defenders, is destabilising. Wright, black and from south London, can be a charming, even loquacious conversationalist, yet he came late into football with a chip on both shoulders and his record of indiscipline is a litany of obscenities, both visual and verbal.

To wait, as the Football Association is customarily doing for reports, to wait inevitably for the processes of law, emanating from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) investigation into the first alleged racist argument between

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the pair, at Old Trafford, cannot help either football or society.

One does not advocate making the game a law beyond judiciary. But even if, in two weeks, the CPS decides that Schmeichel has a case to answer, the long and grinding

and flawed process through the courts would leave impressions as ugly as stud marks on the game and on the public's view of intolerance within it.

The allegation against the Denmark international was refuted yesterday by Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager. "We can categorically deny any racist remark — whatsoever — from Peter Schmeichel," he said.

However, Taylor was correct to seek — before the coming-together in acrimony of Wright and Schmeichel on Wednesday — to act as mediator between the pair. He was correct in suggesting that the FA was the proper umbrella for this mediation, but what a pity that Lancaster Gate dithered, prefer-

ring to put off any action unless, or until, police concluded their investigation.

Wright, of course, can do no wrong. Arsenal, inevitably, tell us so. Arsene Wenger, their French manager, chose yesterday to joke: "Maybe they will meet before the next game and sort this out — and kill one another!"

These are the very last words we need to hear in the present situation. We have a public game, two highly paid public figures and around them an atmosphere in which a national newspaper has recently taken upon itself to name, with photographs, white youths who they say killed a black person simply because of racial intolerance.

This afternoon, in stadiums throughout Britain, football again will engage our emotions. The winner-takes-all philosophy means that some player, somewhere, may take his cue from Wright, a

member of the England international squad.

"I have seen many, many tackles and punches that have not been judged or seen by referees and nobody talks about them," Wenger insisted. His own club happens to be bottom of the fair play league, with 59 yellow cards and four red ones in 27 FA Carling Premiership games, yet Wenger will not apologise for indiscipline.

If Arsenal has nothing better to offer in this matter, if the FA is merely lying back waiting, then perhaps Taylor must go it alone. Football needs an immediate and public handshake, a cessation of hostile words and actions, from Wright and Schmeichel. One hopes that the PFA can arrange this, can, in the sporting vernacular, "knock their heads together" and remind the players of Arsenal and Manchester United what they owe from the game and what they owe to the public.

Chelsea prepare for test of title credentials

Gullit fails to tempt Kluivert from Ajax

By RUSSELL KEMPSON AND PETER BALL

RUUD GULLIT'S empire building at Chelsea has received a temporary setback, with Patrick Kluivert, the Holland and Ajax striker, having declined to join the expanding foreign legion at Stamford Bridge. Gullit's audacious attempt failed because of Kluivert's preference to play in Italy, for AC Milan, rather than in England when he leaves Ajax at the end of the season.

Gullit's move, though unsuccessful, is barely surprising. His contacts extend deep into Europe, built from a highly successful playing career, and he has persuaded Gianluca Vialli, Gianfranco Zola, Roberto Di Matteo and Frank Leboeuf to forsake the continent for West London this season.

The offers of vast salaries have helped entice the three Italians and Leboeuf, a Frenchman, but even reported wages of £25,000-a-week were not enough to lure Kluivert, 20, from Amsterdam. He will follow a similar route to Gullit, the Chelsea player-manager, who left PSV Eindhoven for AC Milan in 1987.



Kluivert: bound for Milan

"I wanted Patrick but I couldn't get him," Gullit said yesterday, after completing his side's preparations for their FA Carling Premiership match against Manchester United at Stamford Bridge this afternoon. "He made his own decision and wanted to try things in Italy."

"I made an attempt, I watched him, I did everything. Nobody knows that, but I go to Holland often and I do my job. But if the player wants to make the same adventure as I

did, that's OK." Gullit may try again. "I've told Patrick that I will wait a year and if it does not go well for him, then I will be back. I am making preparations for next season and anyone can see that we are short of bodies. We don't need just players, we need good players."

However, Paul Ince, the England and Internazionale midfielder player, does not enter the Chelsea equation. Gullit was unimpressed by the pairing of Ince and David Batty, of Newcastle United, when England lost 1-0 to Italy in their World Cup qualifying match at Wembley last week.

"I have no interest in Paul," Gullit said. "We have a similar player in Eddie Newton and having two players like that, you will get the same thing that happened for England against Italy. I'm very happy with Eddie, he's doing very well and I don't need him and Ince in the same area."

Chelsea need to win today to retain any interest in the title chase. They trail United, the leaders, by 12 points, but have games in hand and were the

last side to beat them, when they won 2-1 at Old Trafford in November.

Mark Hughes, the Chelsea striker, who spent 13 years with United, recognises there is no room for error. "If we don't get any kind of result, it will be difficult for us to make a challenge," he said. "I'm not saying it would be the end for us, but it would make them very difficult to catch."

"United have been setting the standards for the last five or six years. Week in, week out, they turn in results. That's what we have to find. They never panic, they always keep their shape and do what they believe in because they know it works. We've got to get on to that level. What helps United is winning things for years — that breeds confidence. Until we win something, we'll be behind them."

Dennis Wise, the Chelsea midfielder player, said: "We always seem to do well against United and now everyone is praying that we beat them again, open it up and give everyone else a chance."

"It's a big game for us, but we have plan which we will stick to. We know we're capable of achieving a place in Europe, now we will find out if we can go on to something more."

United's pursuit of a fourth title in five years was strengthened by their decisive, if controversial, 2-1 victory against Arsenal at Highbury on Wednesday night — a result that stretched their unbeaten league run to 14 matches. Peter Schmeichel, the United goalkeeper, was again involved in an unsavoury incident with Ian Wright, the Arsenal striker.

"The players are strong, they have looked really good in training and they are handling the whole thing the right way," Alex Ferguson, the United manager, said. "They are not going to be derailed. We must keep focused and not think of side issues."

Schmeichel has two stud marks and swelling on his right ankle, the legacy of a late challenge from Wright, but is expected to retain his place. Gary Pallister and Denis Irwin are doubtful because of injuries and Eric Cantona completes a two-match suspension, but Ferguson is likely to continue with the experimental pairing of Andy Cole and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer up front.



Luc Alphand, of France, hurtles towards victory in the super giant slalom World Cup event at Garmisch-Partenkirchen yesterday, proving that

his failure to win a medal at the recent world championships in Sestriere was a rare aberration in an all-conquering season. His success gave him the lead

in the overall World Cup standings. "Forget about the world championships," he said. "That's all water under the bridge."

Hingis replaces Graf in driving seat

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

MARTINA HINGIS, the Swiss tennis sensation, who is not yet old enough to drive, has signed a three-year sponsorship deal with Opel, the car company. In the latest of a series of business agreements, Hingis, 16, signed a three-year contract with the General Motors subsidiary on Thursday. She replaces Steffi Graf, the world No 1 from Germany, whose contract with the company was terminated last year in the wake of the scandal surrounding her tax affairs.

GM Europe officials declined to say how much they

will pay Hingis to wear their logo, star in commercials and smile at corporate events, but informed speculation is that it will be about \$680,000 (£430,000) per year.

Hingis, who won the Australian Open last month to become the youngest grand-slam event champion in 100 years, has moved up to No 2 in the world rankings. Even before her recent triumph in Melbourne, she had signed a \$10 million, five-year deal with Sergio Tacchini, the Italian sportswear company.

A GM Europe spokesman said yesterday: "Relations remain good between us and

Steffi Graf, even though there is no formal contract. We didn't separate on bad terms."

He added that GM Europe had had close links with Hingis and her family for the past four years. "It's just a new chapter," he said.

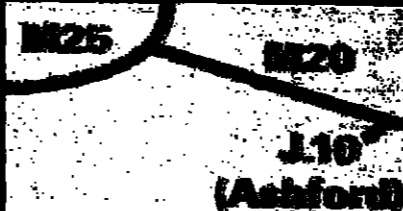
Marc Gollner, of Germany, made comfortable progress into the semi-finals of the European Community championship in Antwerp yesterday as Martin Damm, his opponent from the Czech Republic, retired injured soon after the start of their match. Damm, ranked No 49 in the world, had needed treatment for a twisted ankle on

Thursday in the closing stages of his second-round victory over Marcelo Rios, the No 2 seed from Chile.

Gollner, the world No 57, had not beaten Damm in their two previous meetings but was in complete control during the 15-minute contest. He broke the Czech's service 2-0 ahead and took a 3-0 lead with an ace. Gollner faces the winner of the quarter-final between Tim Henman, the British No 1 and sole surviving seed, and Francisco Claver, a clay-court batter from Spain, who has taken three sets to win each of his previous two matches.

To really fly to Paris or Brussels, take Eurostar from Ashford, Kent.

When you travel from Eurostar's international terminal in Ashford, Kent, it takes only 2 hrs 15 mins to central Paris and 2 hrs 30 mins to Brussels. It's just a few minutes from the M20 and there's parking for 2000 cars. So why waste time driving to the airport when you can fly to Paris or Brussels by train?



0345 303030 or see an appointed travel agent or railway station.



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SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22 1997

LINDA McDUGALL PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOHN ANGERSON



Waiting for E-Day

FRIDAY

Austin has a letter from Tony Blair in the post at home asking him for help in running the country.

"...together you and I can make it possible for everyone to have a fair chance of a job..." Rapid shallow breathing.

Then we spot: "...if you intend to vote Labour, will you send us fifteen quid..."

A cruel trick. You'd think they'd be more sensitive in the pan-handling unit at Millbank Tower.

I've booked us a holiday. We're off on the 21st of March or the 11th of April or the 2nd of May. It's up to John Major. Austin [Mitchell] has been MP for Grimsby for nearly 20 years and, now that there's a distinct possibility of a Labour victory, local people who don't understand the secret world of Westminster are asking him what ministerial job he'll get, and what car.

Having "difficult" views on Europe, and a rapidly approaching bus pass make an MP, well, hard to place (unless he's Alan Clark). Austin doesn't really want to sit around explaining his failure, while the phone never rings. So we're off to Death Valley, California.

One of the few perks I get as an MP's wife is 15 first-class return tickets between London and

home every year. On Friday afternoons I head for King's Cross and the Great North Eastern Railway (InterCity privatised, but still preserving the unique public relations style of old British Rail).

Watched by a youthful ticket clerk, I make a bit of a mess filling in my destination on the warrant form. I have been using warrants for 20 years; changing them, spilling coffee on them, even forging. A's signature (in extremis) No one (smile brilliantly here) has ever rejected one before.

"Well, I'm rejecting it, and you'll have to buy a ticket," barks the triumphant supervisor.

Seventy five quid! Can't make a fuss; the impatient people queueing behind me are almost certainly Grimsby voters heading home.

Arrive home to find Austin in the kitchen. He has large hammer and is crashing up and down on my lovingly restored antique pine table.

"Hello darling, what are you doing?" (or something like that), I say. He has lost his car aerial and is crafting a new one from a wire coathanger (and he

wonders why he's not ministerial material).

SATURDAY

Eric phones. Eric is Troublemaker in Chief. Sometimes a party member, sometimes not. Head honcho of the "Save Britain's Fish" campaign. He's 70 plus, rides a bicycle, wears a beret and a monocle and has absolutely all our home and office phone numbers. He phones and faxes at any hour of the day and night.

Eric is very worried. He has heard that Tony Blair is going to ban Euro-sceptics like Austin from taking a stand against EMU. Eric has just finished crafting panels for Austin's car, which scream, "Save Britain's fish. Save Britain's pound!" in 5ft-high letters. Will he be able to get away with this, or will Peter Mandelson personally appear on the 15.30 to Cleethorpes to tear them from the car? Say I'm not sure but

will consult A and call back. Hang up.

Eric phones again instantly. He is also installing a loud-speaker in the car so that he can shout, "Save Britain's fish. Save Britain's pound. Vote Labour!"

What will Tony Blair have to say about this? Remember all the complaints about Eric sounding like Hitler in previous elections. Suggest panels will have stunning impact and sound is not necessary. Eric extremely cross.

SUNDAY

There is a service on St Andrew's Dock in Hull at noon to remember all the fishermen who have died at sea. The service is very moving. Hard-faced trawlermen weep as we sing, "hear us as we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea", and watch carnations scattered on the water float away to sea.

Afterwards I am chatting

with the Hull Euro MP Peter Crampton. Another Westminster MP, Stuart Randall, comes up and starts talking to Peter. Suddenly he thrusts a hand out to me and says: "Hello, I don't believe we have ever met." Stare at him in amazement and point out I am Austin's wife and not Peter's. And that he has known me for two decades. Launch into my favourite theory that middle-aged women are, in fact, invisible and that no one ever knows who I am unless I have Austin standing by my side. Stuart says his wife feels exactly the same. Wonder if he recognises her if he sees her chatting to John Prescott?

When we get home Austin spends a couple of hours assembling all the gear he was given on the BBC *Style Challenge* programme. Dark grey Italian wool suit, grey shirt, discreet grey and white tie, and navy "City gent" overcoat. Very

New Labour, very un-Austin. Ask him why. Says it's for next Wednesday morning when most of the Parliamentary Labour Party have a photo opportunity with Tony Blair.

They all have to turn up in the Shadow Cabinet room, pay five quid and get to pose with the Leader for as long as it takes to take a snap for the election leaflet.

Austin says he is planning to tell Tony about the holiday in Death Valley and see if he asks him not to go. (He wouldn't be so daft, would he?)

MONDAY

Not yet broken new year's resolution to give up trying to change Austin. Resolution strongly tested when I walk in the door from work. He is sitting on sofa asking what there is to eat, and wearing the most appalling tie I have ever seen - *Baywatch* babes rampant. Pamela Anderson just over his heart. Ignore tie. Make supper. Austin goes off to vote, and be on *Newsnight*. Small soup stain on Geena Lee Nolin.

TUESDAY

Six-thirty am. Swimming pool

changing room. Smart-arse civil servant woman asks me how I can tolerate being married to man who wears ties like that? She is not joking. Tell her I wonder that myself sometimes. I am not joking.

Tie gets mention on *Yesterday in Parliament*.

Austin has made an important contribution to last night's debate suggesting Millennium celebrations should be relocated from Greenwich to Grimsby.

Tie appears again in Matthew Parris's *Times* column under "Grimsby or bust", headline.

World in Action producer rings to ask where he could buy a tie like that. Offer to post it to him, free.

WEDNESDAY

Tony Blair photo opportunity day. Austin up early assembling his *Style Challenge* kit. He amazes me by suggesting these events have to be taken seriously. Perhaps he really does believe there's a chance for him in New Labour.

Around lunch time I ring to see how it went. Cancelled. It will be rescheduled "in the future".

Well, that's good news then. A few weeks more freedom for us. They can't have a general election when a couple of

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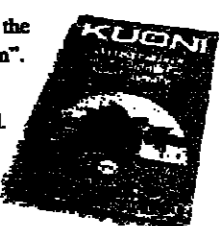
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Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to board a No 13 bus at Finchley Road, London NW2, obtain, by any means necessary, a ticket to take you as far as Oxford Street, and return within three hours with six bagels, a tube of Oxy-10, a fully working office-type clock housing a mono CCTV and microphone, and a camera concealed in a cigarette lighter.

If you take my advice, you will pick up the bagels at Panzer's in St John's Wood on the way back so as to get them as fresh as possible; the zit cream you can buy in Boots at Swiss Cottage. As for the surveillance equipment, well, everyone knows you can get that from Spymaster at Portman Square.

For a long time, before I started shopping there regularly on my

way to work, I was intrigued by the grey frontage of Spymaster. In the same way that my local newsagent has "News-Mags-Chocolate-Fags" above the door, so Spymaster has "Counter Surveillance-Survival Equipment-Body Armour-Night Vision".

For years, though, I never went in. When I needed, say, a lightweight anti-slab jacket or a Dedal 40 Image Intensifying Rifle Scope I just had to make it myself. I assumed that you needed some sort of cash-and-carry card issued only to OO agents and occasionally forged by Drax operatives.

Push open their door, which is like any other door on any other shopping street, and you enter another world. "What is this thing that looks like your common or garden fizzy drinks can (£15)? you

SERIOUS SHOPPING

COUNTER ESPIONAGE



GILES COREN

ask. And a rolling-shouldered man in his mid-20s, most unQ-like, shakes it so that you hear the fizzy drink gurgling inside, and then unscrews the top to reveal a secret compartment ideal for the storage of Semtex, microfilm, shark repellent (E30)...

He shows you the night vision equipment, and, naturally, you want to know all about the headset that you slip on to trace baddies in the dark, but he tells you that those are a bit dated now and hands you a pocket scope (£3,500). "This is the smallest second-generation night vision unit on the market. It intensifies available light by a factor of 20,000, is water-resistant

and will accept any 'C' mount lens... Pay attention, 007! But you cannot, because in the background there are people trying out pinhole cameras that can be

disguised in a tie and calculators with hidden transmitters. "Leave it on the table at a board meeting and when you go to the loo you can listen to what they say while you are out of the room."

These people may have been trained in the identifying and disabling of malevolent agents, but what they know about calming paranoid tendencies could be invisible-linked on the back of an exploding cigar. "If you think you have a problem," says their brochure, "then you probably have."

To this end, you can sort yourself out with a telephone-tap packed in what looks like a travelling chess set (£1,250). All you

have to do is sneak up on the home of the intended victim, cut the phone line, reconnect it using two small crocodile clips, and you're away. Unless, of course, said victim has purchased a scrambler (E500) or a voice changer (E70), which will make him sound like Metal Mickey and never hold up in court.

If you don't think you can cope with the rigours of espionage yourself, they know a man who can: "Should you suspect that you have an information leak? we have a highly trained counter-team available..."

My only worry is that the man who comes to mend the leak will be more like a plumber than a double agent: a man who appears in a wet suit, peels off to reveal a

dinner jacket, and then says, "Dear, dear... If only you'd called earlier. Best thing is to chuck it out and get a new one. Milk and two sugars if you're asking."

Much better to pick up a copy of *Sniper/Counter Sniper*, or *How to Disappear Completely*, and DIY. Then you will need some camouflage cream, a commando wire saw, some self-heating food and jungle survival pack, and you should be able to sneak off the bus with your bagels and a one remedy concealed in the Celltrack mobile phone interceptor — it is marked as a "restricted user product: law enforcement, military, and government agencies only" — but you have clearance at the highest level. Tell them we sent you.

This column will self-destruct in ten seconds...

Cutting edge of designer cutlery



MAIN PICTURE: 1 Simple fish-head stainless steel cutlery; £3.95 for a teaspoon, £7.95 for a knife, from the Conran Shop, Michelin House, 81 Fulham Road, SW3 6RD (0171-589 7401). 2 Chunky cutlery with pewter handles "inspired by the new South Africa", by Carol Boyes (range includes heart, wave and Aries designs), £26-£50, from Carrie Bateman at Design Divine; available by mail order (0181-289 5556). 3 Twig-handled, silver-plated and brass cutlery; £4.50 for a teaspoon, £12.50 for a knife, from the Conran Shop, as above. 4 Silver-plated cutlery with beaten design on handle, by Maryse Boxer at Chez Joseph; six-piece setting, £85, Chez Joseph, 26 Sloane Street, SW1X 7LQ (0171-245 9493). 5 First made in the mid-1930s "Harley" Sheffield stainless steel with a classic double reverse thread detail in the handle, seven-piece single place setting £56.85 (in silver-plate, £107.85), from Master Cutler, 3 Shepherd Street, Mayfair, W1Y 7AN (0114-272 1504).

RIGHT: "Ammonite" stainless steel cutlery designed by Robert Welch, as below Silver Jester napkin ring, £54, by Mita Tanya Griebel (0171-328 8880). Cream damask napkin (24in), £22 each, or £130 for six, from the Irish Linen Company, 35-36 Burlington Arcade, W1 (0171-493 8949).

FOR THE true gourmet, it's not only what you eat, but what you eat it with. Fortunately, etiquette no longer dictates a vast canteen of cutlery, but there's nothing more dismal than tucking into your meal with beaten-up knives and forks. Designers are now turning their attention to cutlery. **SUDI PIGOTT**

MAIN PICTURE: 6 For label-conscious diners, Hermès' new range of stainless steel cutlery is much heavier and larger than most sets on sale; £26 for a fork, £40 for a knife, from Hermès, 179 Sloane Street, London SW1 (0171-823 1014). 7 Cream "Carthage" cutlery with nylon handles and engraved old-silver-look detail ends, dishwasher safe; each piece £2.25, from Dickens & Jones At Home, 224-244 Regent Street, W1A 1DB (0171-734 7070). 8 "Ammonite" stainless steel cutlery designed by Robert Welch, a contemporary version, with hollow handles, of the traditional pistol-grip handle design popular since the mid-18th century; six seven-piece place settings, £300, from Robert Welch, Studio Shop, Lower High Street, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire GL55 8DY; available by mail order (01386 840522). 9 Iron Age stainless steel cutlery, six-piece place setting £75, by Maryse Boxer from Chez Joseph, 26 Sloane Street, SW1X 7LQ (0171-245 9493).

CENTREPIECE: Fornasetti-designed plate, £33.70, from Rosenthal Studio House, 137 Regent Street, W1 (0171-734 3076).

Photographs: Des Jenson Styling; Caroline Griffiths



Cheese: the immaculate Member for Great Grimsby, right

Continued from page 1
hundred Labour MPs haven't got a photograph of themselves taken with their leader.

FRIDAY
Austin phones me to say he is very ill. When I arrive home at our house in Halifax mid-evening, he is wrapped in a blanket on the sofa writing his Anti Europe, Anti EMU (and no doubt soon to be banned) election manifesto, and watching old movies on Sky. "What's for tea?" he asks between bouts of coughs and sneezes.

The kitchen is in chaos. Austin has been shopping, something which only happens when an election looms and he wants everyone to know how involved in the community he is. (You'll never guess who I saw in the supermarket today...)

SATURDAY
Surprisingly, Austin still alive, but refusing to take phone calls, particularly from Eric. Fax arrives from Eric. He absolutely must try fitting the panels on the car today.

I set out for Eric's. He lives behind Blundell Park, the football stadium. The panels are made of wood. They are about 10ft long and 4ft high.

6 Austin suggests he and Tony should be photographed shaking hands. Art director says no. This will look like they've just met

They are painted bright scarlet and weigh a ton. The idea is to use them as a superstructure. A ferocious system of metal clamps will attach them to the car roof. Eric and I stumble into the road with one and hoist it aloft. The message is in bright yellow:

AUSTIN SAYS: SAVE BRITAIN'S FISH SAVE BRITAIN'S POUND!

Passing Grimsby Town fans gawp in disbelief. Eric mutters and adjusts clamps. He asks me to get into the car, open the sunroof, and stand on the driver's seat to test whether Austin will be visible above the superstructure. Believe it or not, I do this, and can just see over the top if I stand on my toes.

MONDAY
Back to London and the biggest day in Austin's calendar. The annual Lords and Commons photographic exhibition. Mrs Bottomley has been invited to open the show. Like

all of us, she has pre-election tension and giggles a lot. She speaks warmly of her talented colleagues and is presented with a video stills camera by the Kodak sponsor. Then she says mysteriously: "Many people here will know that I am married to a shopaholic, so this will be very useful." Slightly hysterical laughter from those in the know.

I am puzzled. Does this mean that she will take stills of all husband Peter's purchases to provide evidence for the Parliamentary tax inspectors in Cardiff?

WEDNESDAY
Austin is over the moon. The Independent has put one of his photos from the exhibition on its front page. He positively skips out of the door on his way to his long-awaited photo op with The Leader. He is going to tell Tony about our holidays plans. He is going to explain just why he needs to tell the truth about EMU in Grimsby, and why he won't be

able to endorse the party line on Europe in his campaign literature.

High noon in the Shadow Cabinet room. Tony Blair is ready and waiting. The Member for Great Grimsby, immaculate in his *Style Challenge* outfit, burbles humorously that The Leader's suit is a bit creased. Leader consults suit doctors. Should he change? They think not.

Eager to get something right, A suggests he and Tony should be photographed shaking hands. Art director says no. This will look like they've just met. Nervous laughs all round. Austin opens his mouth to speak, but no words will come.

The Leader smiles his big Blair smile and holds out his hand. Three handshakes, three frames of film, and it's all over.

There is now a long queue of expectant MPs laden down with props from their constituencies, brought to add a "local" feel to their election

literature. Hugh Bayley clutches a glossy brochure from York council. Perhaps he is going to ask The Leader to bless it?

FRIDAY
Because the election is so close, family life is on hold. I head straight for Grimsby on Fridays. I arrive in the mayor's parlour, Cleethorpes, for the local authority dinner in honour of its two MPs, Austin and the Tory Michael Brown. Everyone knows this will be the last official event before the election, so there's an end-of-term atmosphere.

Lisa, the photographer from the *Grimsby Evening Telegraph*, arrives and takes a shot of us all standing in a line and grinning dementedly.

As soon as the speeches are over we belt off to Leeds for a *This is Your Life* on TV presenter Richard Whiteley, one of our oldest friends. Call from Eric on mobile. What did Tony Blair say about the panels for the car? Say I am not sure A and The Leader got round to this topic in their far-reaching discussion, but will consult and get back to him.

Get home at midnight and in a moment of madness offer to drive Austin, who looks exhausted, back to Grimsby for his Saturday surgery in six hours' time. He perks up and says that while I'm there I can visit Eric and sort something out about the panels.

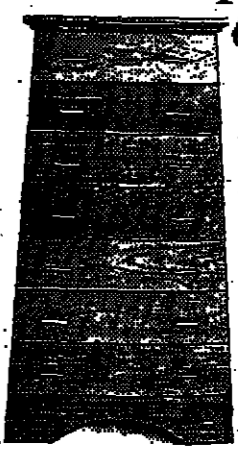
After surgery we head for Immingham for a photo opportunity for Shona McIsaac, the Labour candidate for Cleethorpes. Lisa from the *Telegraph* (does she never get any time off?) arranges the group, including Austin, all dressed in sweaters and weekend trousers. Shona, the perfect Labour woman candidate

in a smart, fitted orange jacket, short skirt and high-heeled shoes, perches nervously smiling on the edge of frame. Wonder how many votes this will land?

I moosh off to sit in the car, and get shouted at by Austin when he returns. "This is the pre-election period you know. People might think we've had a row if you bugger off like that."

Dear John Major, Let's have the election very soon. Please. They need me back at the office...

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SHOW

A suitable girl



RIGHT: Navy three-button jacket, £106; matching trousers, £43, Sisley, selected Benetton branches (0161-929 9259). Blue stretch boob tube, £25, No Such Soul, Hype DF (0171-937 7835). Beige thong kitten-heel shoes, £300, Jimmy Choo, to order (0171-235 6008)



ABOVE: Cream four-button jacket, £75; matching trousers £40, Warehouse, 19-21 Argyle Street, W1, and branches (0171-278 3491). Blue, choc and beige stripe cotton knit vest, £65, Jigsaw, 126-127 New Bond Street, W1, and branches (0171-491 4484)



ABOVE: Black suede/patent wedge, £38.99, Office, 57 Neal Street, WC2, (mail order, 0181-838 4447)

THREE OF A KIND

WITH their Seventies image, wedge-heeled shoes are making a comeback with new versions for the Nineties. These three are among the best. H.B.

TOP: Denim plastic cork, £75, Red or Dead, 1 Sloane Street, SW1, (0171-235 1335).
LEFT: Blue, mesh wedge, £125, Donna Karen, 19 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-495 3100)

Take John Galliano's advice: wear trouser suits for spring. They're sharp, sassy, versatile — the perfect antidote to those feminine florals



ABOVE: Pale blue crepe double-breasted jacket, £160; matching trousers, £85, Karen Millen, branches nationwide (01622 664032)

RIGHT: Brown moc-croc jacket, £79; matching trousers, £45, Kookai, 123 High Street Kensington, London W8 (0171-937 4411). Snakeskin sandals, £300, Jimmy Choo, made to order (0171-235 6008)



All photographs: William Davies
Hair/make-up: Alex Babicky
Styling: Amanda Uppeal

The flipside to the ultra-feminine floral and ruffle looks around at the moment are the more sober masculine styles of women's trouser suits. Sharp and sassy, they are ideal for work or play and can be adapted for eveningwear. At work, simple, good quality T-shirts or sharp, crisp-collared blouses can be worn beneath the jacket, but do not wear cravats or ties. These were big on the catwalks this season but avoid them. As the Savile Row tailor Richard James puts it: "Any woman wearing a tie looks silly — even the Princess of Wales."

At formal events, such as a company cocktail party, Christian Dior's maverick designer John Galliano is all for a trouser suit, saying: "A bias-cut suit can look both formal and elegant." When asked about his preference for skirts or trousers, he said: "Trousers suits are the modern choice for spring."

A quick change from stiff shirt to a lace camisole, and out of your practical loafers into simple kitten-heels, can transform a day suit into evening effortlessly.

On more casual occasions, the look can be toned down with a simple, stripey, fine-knit singlet, a bra-top or a boob-tube. The more adventurous could opt to wear nothing underneath a well-lined, high-cut jacket or low-cut top.

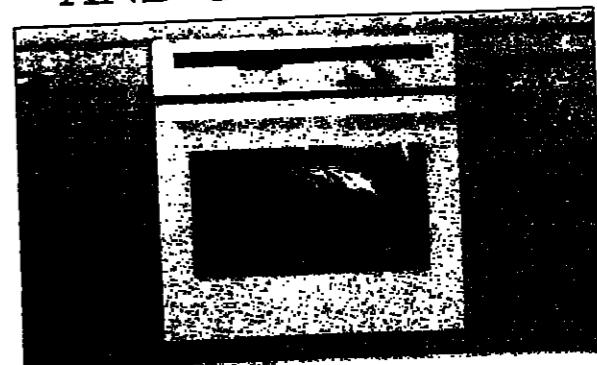
A hint of lace on the edge of a scooped top can lift an outfit if peeking from beneath the jacket in a contrast colour — light blue under navy, beige under chocolate. Fine crepes and wools can soften an outfit, and will keep you cool. New technology textiles, such as breathable synthetic mixes and high-sheen plastics, are youthful and add a modern edge to even the most classic of styles.

When it comes to jacket buttonings, there are no rules. Double-breasted is back but cut in softer lines, three and two-button high fastenings cover well, and a new one-button look is simple and clean.

The most important part of the suit, the trousers, tend to be slim-legged this year and, when worn with a longline jacket, are flattering to most figures. Slight bootleg kick flares can be found but will soon date. Look out for suits that come with a matching skirt for extra versatility and longer wearability.

HEATH BROWN

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Picture television footage of hurricane Flossie ripping through the Caribbean, coconut palms bent almost double in the torrents of wind and rain. Then picture the fan palm *Trachycarpus* in a Himalayan woodland at 8,000 feet, covered in snow from November to March. This has to be the one we are interested in.

Then picture Martin Gibbons, palm collector, in a gold-mining ghost town, deep in the Sudan and the Nubian desert, finding the Argon palm, whose fruits were buried in ancient Egyptian tombs, and which has not been recorded in the wild since 1907. This man is determined we should enjoy hardy palms more in Britain, and I have to agree.

Palms have become a way of life for Martin Gibbons. After school he spent three years working in Australia, and visited Singapore Botanic Garden, which is known for the range of its different palms.

He came home, found jobs in a supermarket then department store sales, was made redundant, and then thought "I should be growing palms". So he did. And sold them. The house was full of them — on the stairs, in the bath, the window ledges, everywhere. He has had his present business, The Palm Centre, in East Sheen not far from Kew Gardens, for eight years. It is a thriving if small concern, but some things don't change. Every inch of the premises is palm-girt. Indoor palms line the stairs to the office, and the old kitchen serves as a potting shed. At the back are polytunnels of rampant palmery.

"I don't grow any plants I don't like. I have tree ferns, and bamboos — oh and cypresses and banyans. And palms. Mostly palms." The trouble with palms — like any big group of closely related plants — is that together in rows, as young

Palm trees can do surprisingly well in British weather, says Stephen Anderton

plants, they start to look the same. Except perhaps that they obviously divide into fan palms and feather palms, by the leaf shape.

But they are all individuals to Martin Gibbons. Last year he spent four months travelling the world looking at palms, collecting seed, and taking photographs. His first book, *Identifying Palms*, has sold in astonishing numbers and has even been translated into Spanish. His customers, as well as home gardeners, include hotels, a zoo, aviaries, swimming pools and a Gulf State ruler. Coals to Newcastle, maybe, but it proves he is a specialist. But only half of what he sells is indoor palms; the other half goes into British gardens.

We talked about that hardest of

palms, the Chusan palm, *Trachycarpus fortunei*, which I had grown successfully in Northumberland. Mine was 10ft tall, and jammed into a small raised bed in a sheltered southeast-facing corner. Gibbons emphasised the need for warmth and shelter, so those huge fan shaped leaves are not ragged by wind. "But the root system is actually quite small. They are very easy to transplant."

I asked how fast they grow (I had only known ruine as an oldie). "As much as a foot a year if they are well fed," said Gibbons, "but they grow for several years before they start to develop a trunk. The crown builds up for 6-8 years in the ground, then it starts to shoot up. Buying a plant which is already a

couple of feet high will save you the first 4-5 years' waiting. They need plenty of food and water to really get them moving." That makes sense. If a palm can only have one bud, it might as well be a big one.

He also recommends tying up the fronds of palms in bitterly cold or snowy periods. "Just pull up the leaves and bundle them together with string, and wrap them with sack or polythene. Ice in the crown does palms most harm. As soon as the weather improves, the wraps can come off again." And that makes sense too: if a plant only has one bud and you lose it, then that plant has had it.

And the best hardy palms for a British garden? *Trachycarpus fortunei*, the Chusan palm, came first. It's the toughest. Second was *Trachycarpus wagnerianus*, which has stiffer fans is less prone to wind damage, and is good in less sheltered gardens. The leaves are deeply cut, like a peacock's tail.

Third came *Trachycarpus sikkimensis*. It does not have the hairy trunk of the Chusan palm, but it has bigger leaves and is extremely fast growing. It requires wind shelter to do well.

Fourth is the Mediterranean fan palm, *Chamaerops humilis*. This, unusually, is a bushy species, and will make a bundle of stems up to 6-8ft in old age. You can clean these up to make a multi-stemmed plant if you like to see the trunks. Martin Gibbons recommends the "blue" form, 'Cerifera', from the high Atlas mountains of Morocco, which has a steely grey, almost blue-white tinge to the foliage.

And lastly? There would have to be one feather palm, as all the others are fans. It was *Butia capitata*, the jelly (as in American jargon) palm, slow to grow, but full of southern promise.

Plant a few if you have space. Plant a jungle, as Nick Sharp has done in his sunny but windy garden near Derby. He has five Chusan palms, two *Chamaerops*, a *Butia*, and is even trying the Brazilian palm, *Trithrinax acanthocoma*, which is another fan palm. "A few more years, and it will be jungle," he says.

PALM OFFER



Trachycarpus fortunei is on offer at £19.95

As a special offer to readers of *The Times*, the hardy palm *Trachycarpus fortunei* (pictured left) which survives the cold well is available ready for planting outside now, at 60-70cm tall, for the reduced price of £19.95 (normally £24.95) plus £4.50 p.p. From Palm Centre at the address below.

The European Palm Society, with a membership of 600 and an annual subscription of £15 is run from The Palm Centre, 563 Upper Richmond Road West, London SW14 7ED. (0181-876-3223. Fax: 0181-876-6888)



Barbados? No Derbyshire: Nick Sharp sits against an Australian tree fern in his garden

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most common questions. Also this month you'll find the second extract from Geoff Hamilton's book, *Private Paradise*. And we welcome back the new series of BBC 2's *Gardeners' World*, with Alan Titchmarsh's ideas on Mediterranean gardening.

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Corsham Court, by Capability Brown and Humphrey Repton

Castle with a carpet of snowdrops

OPEN THIS WEEKEND

■ **Corsham Court, Corsham, Wiltshire** (01249 701610). On A4, four miles west of Chippenham. Open Jan-Mar, Sat-Sun, 2-4.30pm; Apr-Oct, daily except Mon (open Bank hols), 11am-5.30pm. £2, children £1. This is a garden of note, having been created by Capability Brown and his successor, Humphrey Repton. Corsham was also one of the projects where Brown was responsible for the house; he carried out extensive alterations and additions to the Elizabethan original, which survives facing the entrance courtyard. Brown's work was followed by further architectural changes, but the impressive picture gallery he designed continues to display one of England's foremost picture collections. Set in parkland to the east of the house is the lake that Brown planned, but never executed, and Repton carried out. To one side, however, is Corsham's gem, the Gothic bathhouse that Brown designed and built, and which ranks among the elite of English garden buildings.

■ **Chirk Castle gardens, Chirk, Wrexham, north Wales** (01691 777701). Off A5 west of Chirk, eight miles north of Oswestry. Open today and tomorrow, noon-4pm (last admission 3.30pm). Then Mar 26-Sept 23, daily except Mon and Tues (open Bank hols). Oct. Sat-Sun, 11am-6pm.



The gardens at Chirk Castle, near Wrexham in north Wales, are renowned at this time of the year for the snowdrops on its terrace and in the large woodland garden

(last admission 4.30pm). Feb weekends £1, children 50p. Later, £2.20, children £1.10.

The great Marches castle, perched on a hill, was clearly built for defence rather than comfort. It is only since the 18th century that its surroundings have been softened with parkland and gardens, whose most impressive decorative feature greets you at the entrance — a superb wrought iron screen and gates made in the 18th century by the Davies blacksmith brothers. From the lawn to one side of the castle, an opening in great, old yew hedges beckons to a long, grassy walk which is the heart of the garden. At the far end, a terrace presents spectacular views over the English border. At this time of year, the feature is the number of snowdrops here and in the large woodland garden.

■ **Wolterton Park, Erpingham, Norfolk** (01263 584175). Two miles north of Aylsham, via A140. Open daily all year, 9am-5pm. Car park £2.

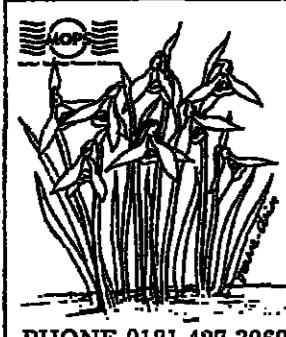
Wolterton, on a crisp winter or early spring day, exemplifies the spaciousness of the 18th-century parks in Norfolk, cradle of England's agricultural revolution at that time. It is a place to walk and think back to the 1730s, when the elegant house was built by Horatio Walpole whose brother, Sir Robert, had recently completed work at

Houghton Hall across the county. The present Lord Walpole is carrying out restoration. A ruined church tower provides a focal point for walks through the park, as well as an attractive note that would have certainly met the approval of Wolterton's original owner. Magnificent spreading oak trees add natural scale to the enormous park, towards which the house faces over a suitably extensive lake. The garden close to the house is open on selected days in summer (telephone for details), but Lord Walpole's main home nearby, Mannington Hall, is even more worthy of a summer visit for its outstanding collection of roses.



Wolterton Park, Erpingham, has fine oaks and an impressive lake

GEORGE PLUMPTRE



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Pye Corner's traditional frontage hides interior flights of fancy

The house at Pye Corner

The mullioned windows of this Cotswold home suggest a country idyll but it's not all chintz inside

Driving through the Cotswold village of Broadway, even the most seasoned nomad should feel a sense of homecoming, even if the "home" in question is one of childhood fancy. Joanna Trollope, car ads and Sunday night television murder mysteries.

Once named the "showcase village of England", Broadway boasts the usual table-mat scenes: golden stone, leaded windows, rambling hills and peaceful, walled gardens.

The Worcestershire village is best known by the older generation as the home of the late car-crazy parliamentarian Sir Gerald Nabarro, and by younger couples for the Lygon Arms Hotel: the perfect venue for weekend breaks and discreet affairs.

At first sight, the House at Pye Corner conforms to this idyll, transporting you to a fictional past where small boys wear horn-rimmed spectacles, scurrying for apples and eat steaming pies: a time when village teashops with jangly doors serve buns from daily-baked cake stands, and humble country folk hold hands and sing carols around the tree.

Pye Corner sits on the edge of the village, on what is thought to be the

original Broadway. Believed to date from the 17th and late 18th century, the house is approached by a sweeping driveway leading to a courtyard and side entrance.

Peering through the stone-mullioned windows from outside, welcoming wood fires burn in the grates, casting a wonderful orange light on chamfered and stopped beams. Once inside, heavy oak doors scream to be hid behind, and cold quarry tiles insist that you remember your slippers.

The previous owner, the former managing director of Endsleigh Insurance, died last year. He had definite ideas about restoration and redecoration, and on closer inspection his personal touches break with the chocolate-box idyll.

Pye Corner is about as far from an urban interior design as you can go, crammed full of idiosyncrasies (cat engravings on the inglenook, an antique four-poster positioned next to a 1970s laminated table).

It is fair to say that many of the previous owner's flights of fancy are aesthetic no-nos. Walking into the music room from the traditionally beamed hall is like discovering Top Shop in the basement of Harvey Nichols. Restored by Christopher Boulter, muralist to the

The chocolate-box image is dispensed with in the music room, where murals tell the story of Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène* and cherubs adorn the ceiling. Above: the hallway

stars, painted panels tell the story of Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*. A painterly slide show charts the life of Helen of Troy, from *The Invocation* to *Venus and The Seduction* through to *The Judgement*. The smudged faces of women with the vital statistics of outsize Sindy dolls smile wearily from the walls.

On the painted ceiling unfurl well-endowed cherubs wink as gill-heavy mirrors reflect the lavish *trompe l'oeil*. The spectacle is enough to make the most dedicated voyeur reach for the Arnie.

More in keeping is the fine working kitchen along the hall with traditional terracotta tiled flooring. A gas-fired Aga provides focus, warmth and the promise of hot pots and rice pudding. The previous

owner was a compulsive picker and the pantry is piled high with pots and bell jars ready to preserve fruit and vegetables from the garden. The breakfast room has built-in antique cabinets for ample storage and the dining room is spacious and smart with polished wood floors and an inglenook fireplace.

The drawing room, at the back of the house, has wall timbers, a built-in window seat and a french door to the terrace which looks out over the garden. An open stone fireplace carries a plaster mould of its maker (a local builder who has entered village lore). His full face, pipe and flat cap jut out from the stone canopy.

Upstairs there are six bedrooms

and three bathrooms. The master bedroom has been recently redecorated. The wallpaper and pea-green paintwork was not to my taste, but it is a good size, with beautiful views of the orchard and the rolling Cotswold hills.

A smaller, darker bedroom at the back of the house has a minstrel's gallery, accessible only by ladder: the first place to check when playing hide-and-seek.

Pye Corner has staggering potential. The spacious attic in the eaves cry out to be made into studios, workshops or teenagers' bedrooms. The stables and outbuildings have lain idle for years. To the side of the house lie empty greenhouses and

an intriguing wood store which looks like a hybrid mix of Canadian log cabin and well-built Wendy house.

The two-and-a-half-acre garden is a mishmash of traditional Cotswold and oriental fantasy. Well-kept lawns at the front hint that the gardens have been lovingly restored to their former glory, with bursting flower beds and finely pruned topiary. Yet a half-finished balustrade cuts through the green at the back, signifying the start of the ambitious Japanese-style sunk garden, which reminded me of something Norris McWhirter might have knocked up, complete with ornamental water plants, bridge and fountain.

At the back a productive vegetable and flower garden with a peach arch, fruit canes, strawberry, asparagus and vegetable beds. The heated swimming pool is well secluded, perfect for weekend parties. Change in the summerhouse, bring out the sun-loungers, shake up some large Martinis and duck and dive in the natural spring water, pumped up from the well.

On the way home, I thought about the dovecote twinkling in the winter sun and developed an urge to load up my imaginary Volvo with family and friends, return to Pye Corner with gloves and apron and start pruning.

ALEX O'CONNELL

● Agents: Hamptons in Broadway (01366 852205)

HOME SWAP



This two-bedroom 19th-century lodge house in Blackheath, south-east London, can be yours for £185,000. Agents: Winkworth 0181-852 0999



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In the Tarn at Garonne, south-west France, the same sort of money (£180,000) will stretch to a fully restored Quercy blanc stone farmhouse in 2.5 acres of garden with a swimming pool and a barn for conversion. The six-bedroom, three-bathroom, four-reception room house comes fully furnished and equipped for 12 people, with beautiful views over open countryside. Agents: Dorris Abroad, 0171-431 4892

CHERYL TAYLOR

Retro living in Seventies heaven

Angie Smith enjoys being in a time warp — her flat is a museum of Biba memorabilia, down to the coffee mugs

Entering Angie Smith's flat in Bethnal Green is a bit like stepping into a film set for *The Avengers* with a few props from *George and Mildred*. Angie is tall and slim with jet-black hair, and usually wears heavy black eye make-up and striking, original Biba clothes.

"My work is not particularly creative so I tend to take out my artistic tendencies on my flat," says Angie. The late Sixties and early Seventies were the best times of my life. This was a really affluent time for entertaining friends and when *Playboy* was a big influence. It was a decade of go-go girls, Kubrik, sports cars and Cocteau — the "me" generation. My favourite year was 1970 and I am happy to live it all the time.

Her collection began when she was 15. The main inspiration was her father, who was a dustman in a wealthy area at the time when punk had just taken hold.

The Sixties and Seventies look had become very unfashionable and Angie's father regularly brought home Seventies lamps, artefacts, records and pointed bras on the "special dustcart". Over the years she has acquired one of the largest personal collections of Biba artefacts and clothes in the country and hires them out to film companies.

A few years ago it was fairly easy to find Biba products and other Seventies decor cheaply in markets and second-hand shops. Now a lot of the pieces, such as the tall, curvy Carlton Ware coffee sets and the brightly coloured shattered Perspex coasters and lamp bases have become collectable and expensive.

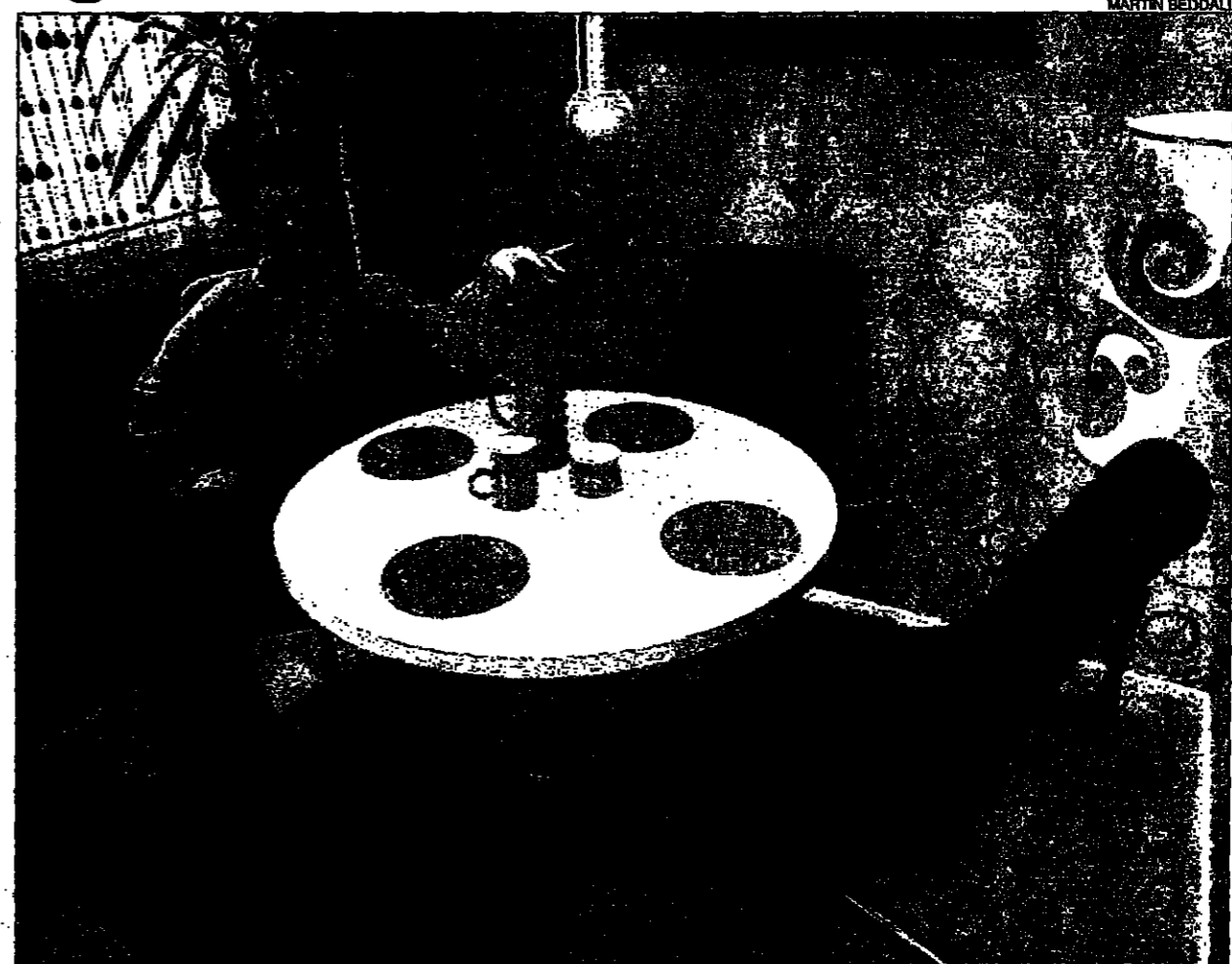
Charity shops and car boot sales are still a good source for Seventies style, and although it has become more popular, it is still possible to pick up black

print curtains, swirly wallpaper and distinctive furniture from that era.

Angie has devoted a lot of her time to the design of her flat. "I have created an environment that I am proud of. It is very personal as I have thought hard about every object and every piece of carpet."

"Nowadays, people don't seem to think about textures or look at a piece of furniture in isolation, but tend to go for an overall look from the pages of an interiors magazine. Too many people in this country have become scared of colour and have hint-of-tint walls with tiny bits of colour such as bright red coffee mugs. It is a bit tricky to match scary colours such as purples and reds as they need to have the same tone, but it is great when you achieve the look you want. I have tried to create a different feel for each room — I like each room to say 'hello' to me."

The overall look is heavily researched and Angie watches period films and reads many books on decorating and collecting Seventies style. She feels it is important to find books that have photos of a house being lived in rather than just showing pieces of furniture. Old copies of *House*



"My favourite year was 1970 and I'm happy to live it all the time," says Angie, who started collecting when she was 15

and *Garden* (available from specialist magazine shops) have proved useful for showing a Seventies house in context. Most houses in the Seventies would still have had pieces from the Sixties and even the Fifties as people did

not go out and buy a complete new range of furniture. The sitting room achieves the young, push-button, modern look of the day with plenty of chrome and glass. The walls are painted beige with tobacco and orange stripes and are decorated with beaten-copper pictures.

The curtains have a bold print of brown and black swirls, and a swinging cane "egg" chair hangs from the ceiling. In the corner is Angie's favourite piece of furniture, a knee-high, orange cylindrical cocktail cabinet. It has porches for the bottles and can be wheeled around at a party with the top being used to hold glasses and canapés.

Through the red, glass-bead door you enter the kitchen with its solid, curved 1953 fridge. Much of the rest of the room pays homage to the Biba food hall. There are mugs, trays and tins, a large array of

jars that once held everything from chickpeas to bicarbonate of soda, all in the distinctive black and gold that Biba used for its logo and motifs. On the walls are the labels from the Biba quiche boxes (one from each of the ten varieties).

The bedroom is designed to have the sensual, velvety feel of a boudoir. The walls are covered in purple hessian, which has not proved practical as the cat loves to climb the walls and tends to shred it.

The dressing table is completely covered with pots of Biba lotions, shampoo and make-up, including silver face and body paint which was fashionable at the time.

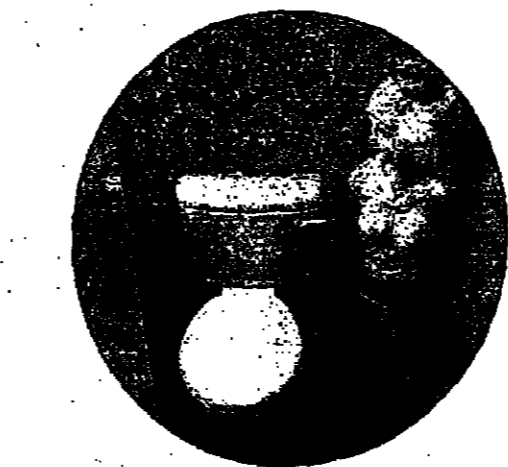
The cupboards are jammed with original Biba outfits (248 to be exact). These range from heavy satin nightdresses and hot pants to a flimsy, empire-line wedding dress and a fake

fur leopard-skin trouser suit. Floppy hats with flowers cover the walls and cupboards. The only room which has yet to receive the treatment is the bathroom. This has proved difficult because bathroom equipment and tiles tend to break and get thrown away when they are taken out of a house. Angie is, however, currently negotiating for a purple bathroom suite.

Angie sadly concedes that she has almost completed the design of her flat.

"The cupboards are overflowing with wallpaper and curtains. I suppose my dream would be to win the lottery and carry on with my collection. I would buy a big Georgian house in Holland Park or Notting Hill and paint it purple on the outside with a turquoise door and window sills."

JOYCE BLAKE



The smallest room in the house is a loo with attitude

هكذا من الامل

The Chinese art of creating harmonious homes may be all the rage but it is important to choose advisers carefully

Beware feng shui phooey

David and Alice wanted a baby. They consulted the doctor but they did not see any harm in consulting a feng shui practitioner too. He came, he saw, he put up a windchime. The couple, now £350 poorer, waited for their lives to become richer.

Nothing happened, however, so they called on Tony Holdsworth of the Midlands Feng Shui Centre in Ettington near Stratford-upon-Avon. He said: "I went with a Chinese master and the windchime was in the wrong place and it was reducing energy when it needed increasing. There was nothing other than a workshop in the area of creativity, and no improvements or suggestions had been made. The real problem was an underground burst sewage pipe in that area. That has been fixed but there is no news yet."

This couple were victims of feng shui phooey and they are not the only ones who have paid good money for bad advice in this trendiest of disciplines. The West has fallen in love with the Chinese art which focuses on the way buildings and interior design affect the well-being and prosperity of the inhabitants. In Britain the trend for creating harmonious homes has gone from New Age fringe to mainstream, with even the likes of Wimpey handing out free guides on the subject.

But this month feng shui is growing up in Britain with two new schools that aim to provide standards and structure for a field that so far has been dominated by the feel-good factor. At last, time is running out for the charlatans and their phooey.

"This kind of course is a must," says Gina Lazenby of the Feng Shui Network in London. "At first there was just a growing awareness of what feng shui is. You know, the 'Gosh, I've got my toilet in the wealth corner and all my money is being flushed away' type of thing. But the awareness is way beyond that now and we need people who know what they are doing and who are professional."

This is easier said than done. Chinese masters select their pupils, who can train for decades before becoming masters. "They would learn throughout their lifetime but cannot practise until they are almost drawing a pension," Ms Lazenby says.

Britain has the opposite problem.

FACT FILE

A FENG SHUI consultant will charge from £150 for a small flat to £250 to £350 for the average home, depending on size and location. This is not cheap and arranging a consultation should be approached in the same spirit that you would hire a specialist lawyer or accountant.

Most feng shui practitioners are found by word of mouth. Another option would be to ring the Feng Shui Network which can refer you to a consultant.

Ask how long your consultant has been practising and how they were trained. Ask for references and follow them up.

At no point should you feel as if the wool is being pulled over your eyes. Gina Lazenby of the Feng Shui Network advises that no one should hire a practitioner they do not feel right about.

Chanting and robes may be fine, but feng shui consultants should also show an awareness of electromagnetic stress, geopathic stress (what is going on underneath your house) and look at the street layout and the outside of your house.

The practitioner should ask about you and your life (including your birth date) and also show an interest in the history of the house and who lived there before.

Some consultants use a Chinese compass or *lo pan* and some do not. If you want a traditional Oriental practitioner, employ someone who uses a *lo pan*. If you are not sure, ask the practitioner about it. Do not let anyone blind you with the science of it.

If the practitioner gives you a list of changes, ask about them.

The number of feng shui consultants here has leapt from a handful several years ago to up to 50 or more. Some are not experienced enough to be practising and it is instructive that the Feng Shui Network only has ten consultants on its books that it will recommend. Tony Holdsworth is even more selective, believing that only a few practitioners here have the expertise to practise.

The reason behind this difference of opinion lies in the nature of feng shui and how some have adapted it



Derek Walters, a feng shui expert, rearranges his garden

Involving yourself in the process gives you more understanding of what is going on.

Lots of people expect feng shui to solve all their problems overnight but in many cases changes are not made all at once.

If you make the changes and

nothing happens or things get worse, ring your practitioner. Gina Lazenby believes most problems stem from poor communication. The practitioner should be happy to discuss the situation and to make further suggestions.

Shui Handbook. "There is a real need for this. I teach a similar course in Germany and have advanced students there," Mr Walters says. "They show me examples of their practical work and they know more about feng shui than others who are charging and working as consultants in Britain."

Like many in Britain, Ms Lazenby stumbled on feng shui by accident when she took a course from William Spear, the American guru of "intuitive feng shui". She set up the network and, in the past

few years, has experienced the boom in the subject first hand with the phones "going crazy". Some 10,000 calls later, she decided the time was right to use her contacts to set up a "professional" course.

Ms Lazenby says feng shui is not a purely Oriental practice. "I see it not as a Chinese thing but as something that is universal. I want to see how we can use it in England, in Scotland, in our semi-detached houses, in our cottages. The *lo pan* compass takes a long time to learn. But there is another way of doing it which is based on intuition. Neither is wrong or right."

Her course, to be held in central London, includes teachers from Australia and America and covers such diverse subjects as electromagnetic stress, feng shui in the kitchen, and children.

"It has to have real value and not be just a few cheap courses put together. I have to balance credibility, professionalism and affordability," she says.

The course involves 50 classes over two to three years. It will cost from £5,000 to £7,000 and graduates may become eligible to go on to the network's consultant registry.

"When this field becomes regulated — and it will be one day — then we will need information in filing cabinets and case studies to show we have done our homework," Ms Lazenby says.

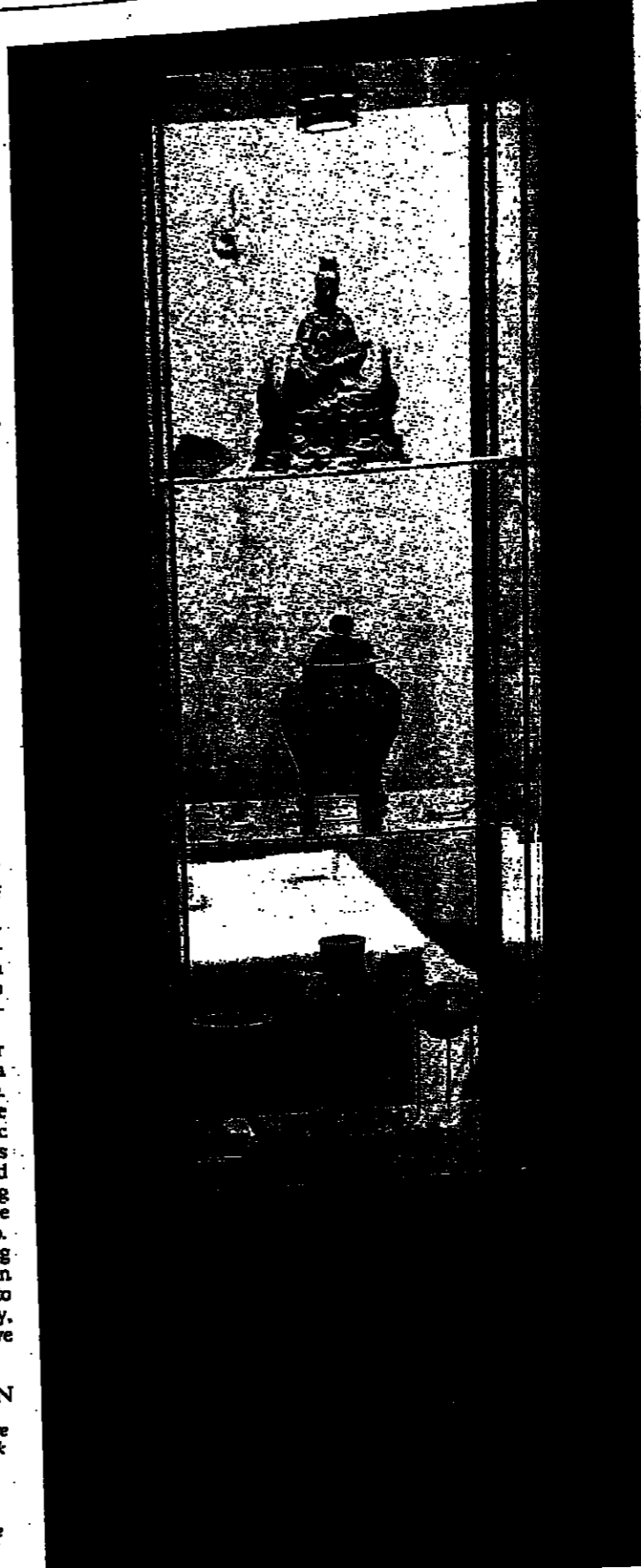
Any consultant worth his or her £150 a session should bring a wealth of experience to your home. They should be knowledgeable about Chinese astrology, geopathic stress and ask lots of questions about the history of your house and your life. Ideally, they will bring you into the process and be available afterwards for follow-up.

"If you have a question, ring them up," Ms Lazenby says. "It's nobody's interest for something to be half-done." Unfortunately, some, like David and Alice, have learnt that the hard way.

ANN TRENEMAN

Details of Gina Lazenby's course are available from the Feng Shui Network International, PO Box 2133, London W1A 1RL (0171-935 8935).

For information on Tony Holdsworth's programme, contact the School of Feng Shui, Vocational Training Course, 34 Banbury Road, Ealing, W5 2JF (0181-949 4106).



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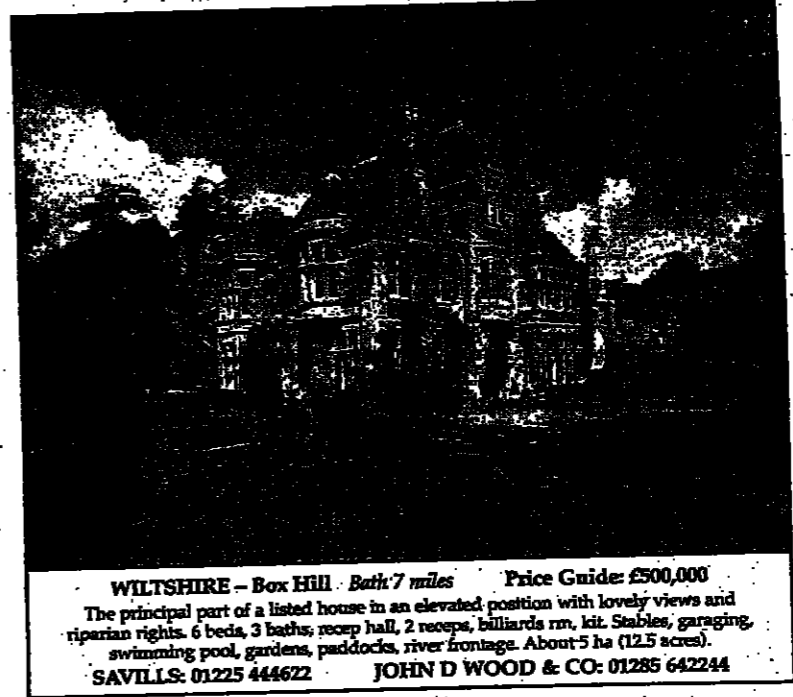
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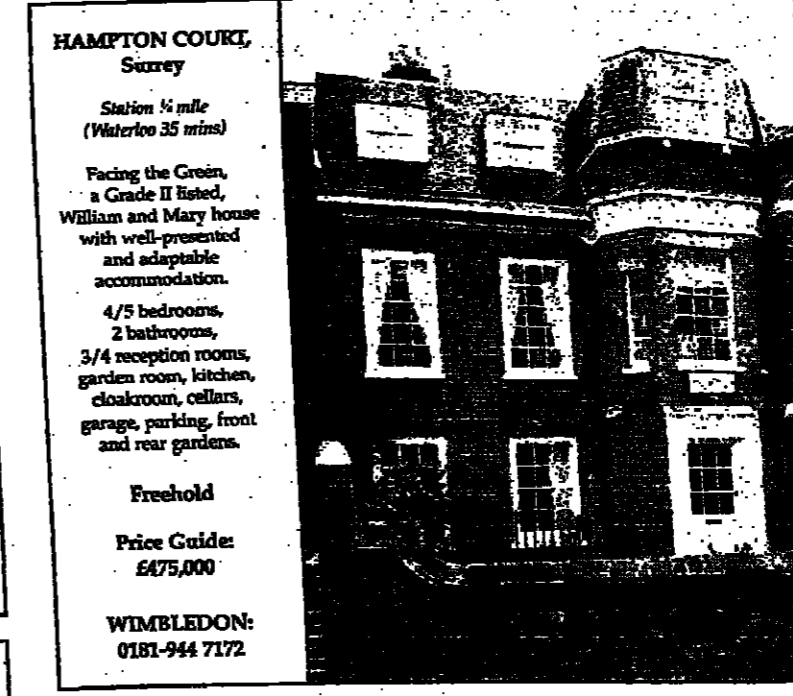
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Houses that lodge in the memory

Gatehouses may be small, but these former servants' quarters are commanding a big audience

Lodge houses, once described as being "in mortal peril", are now being snapped up by affluent buyers prepared to pay over the odds for quirky individuality.

It is easy to be beguiled by the little buildings standing sentry at the entrances to the parks of great houses. They were usually designed by the architect of the great house itself as a foretaste of the splendour to be found at the end of the drive. They could be described as baby houses and, like baby animals, their smallness is part of their appeal.

But that very smallness can be a problem for a home, as can their usual proximity to a main road. Some lodges have a major drawback: they are divided by the drive, the living room being on one side, the bedroom on the other.

Architectural historian Dr Tim Mowl, of Bristol, who has co-written a book about lodges, says the earliest examples were built after 1710, when fashion turned from formal gardens to walled parks. These required gates, usually at some distance from the house. Improved road surfaces led to more coaches, which called for gate keepers, who needed housing. In the 18th century, landlords rarely considered their servants' comfort and many early lodges are cramped inside. In Victorian times owners became more philanthropic and many 19th-century lodges make lovely homes.

Yet as recently as the 1980s many of these houses were decaying, either because the landlord had no wish to sell them for refurbishment, or because house-hunters overlooked them. In 1988, Dr Mowl estimated that about one-fifth of the 10,000 to 15,000 lodges in Britain were derelict.

"Lodges is a distinguished and ennobling building type, and in mortal peril," he said and speculated: "The reason for their decay has to be the memory — in a class-conscious society — of servile gate-watchers bobbing curtsies and tugging forelocks as the carriages rolled by."

Hopefully, this dismal picture has changed. Surrey estate agent Curchods says lodges command a premium of 10 per cent because of their originality and rarity.

"They always attract a great deal of interest and we can quite easily target the most likely buyers," Andrew Dewar, a joint senior partner, says. "These properties tend to at-

tract professional couples who want to enjoy their freedom to live in something idiosyncratic. They draw people who are not conformist.

"There is usually more than one purchaser champing at the bit to buy lodges. They want the quirks and will pay a premium," he says.

Last November Curchods marketed three lodges in Surrey. Two have already sold for their asking price.

The Gatehouse near Ottershaw is one of a pair built in 1795 by Wyatt. It has two bedrooms, a drawing room, dining room and conservatory, and sold for £235,000.

Emma Rickwood, aged 27, managing director of a restaurant company, and her husband Ian, 29, a management consultant, moved into The Gatehouse in January. "Every time I drive home I think, do I really live here?" said Mrs Rickwood. "I suppose we did pay a bit of a premium for it. You could buy a nice four-bedroom property in this area for the same price but there are plenty of couples like us who want a small amount of space but want something with a bit of character."

East Lodge at Pains Hill, Cobham, also has two bedrooms and two reception rooms and is still for sale at £235,000. Curchods also sold a one-bedroom lodge in Weybridge for £145,000.

Elsewhere in the country, some stunning lodges are still on the market, the grandest being the Gate House at Englefield Green, Surrey, which, situated on the edge of Windsor Great Park, has royal neighbours and is only a mile away from the polo ground at Smith's Lawn. Just 500 yards from the Gate House is Royal Lodge, the Queen Mother's home.

The red-brick Grade II listed eight-bedroom house is held on licence from the Crown Estate — the annual fee is £2,500, which includes the right to use a private access into the main park. It has been in the same family for 45 years and needs renovating, which explains the asking price from Knight Frank of £360,000.

A more typical small lodge house being marketed by Black Horse Agencies is West Gate Lodge at Flimwell Grange, Flimwell, East Sussex, which has two bedrooms, a small dining room and a compact sitting room for sale for £110,000. The smallest on offer, through Savills' York office, is East Gate Lodge at Grimston Park, North York-

shire, which is a cute one-up one-down building. The sitting-room is just 10ft by 9ft 4in. Its kitchen is 10ft 4in by 7ft 10in, both being on the lower ground floor, while its only bedroom, on the ground floor, is a compact 10ft 8in by 7ft 6in. The house has a small garden and a parking area, and the asking price is £65,000.

Taskers Arch at Anna Val-



Ian and Emma Rickwood outside The Gatehouse in Ottershaw, Surrey, one of a pair built in 1795 by Wyatt. They bought the two-bedroom lodge last year for £235,000.

ley, near Andover, Hampshire, is probably the most unusual lodge available at the moment. The arch bridges two lodge houses built around 1834 by Robert Tasker, founder of a local iron works. Beneath the arch was an iron gate made in the foundry. One lodge was used as a chapel on Sundays and as a school on weekdays for the children of ironwork-

ers. The schoolmistress and her husband lived in the other lodge, and had the use of the arch room, which now provides a third bedroom for the west side of the lodge, which is now for sale at £99,950.

The unusual building features in the Test Valley Tapestry, which hangs in the Test Valley Council building, Andover, and the marketing agent, John D. Wood, says it "has great charm and character and is extremely versatile".

At there are also modern lodges for sale, which are purpose-

built with all modern conveniences. One of two lodge houses either side of the gate at Cavendish Lodge, Bath, a block of 20 flats that is being built by Beaufort Homes in the form of a large classical mansion. One lodge has already been sold but the other, a two-bedroom show home, is still available for £260,000.

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It is worth remembering that the balance of power which exists between us and animals, seen at its most raw in the countryside and on the farm, exists only because, when it comes to knowing how many beans make five, we get it right more times than they do. We are cleverer, and so in the end we win. For example,

I can foresee a time when, instead of responding to the scare tactics of beaters at shoots, the pheasants would stub-

ing their mounts
cups of morning tea to get them in a
compliant mood. Shepherding would
come to an end, because sheep would
soon learn that they could run rings
around men with crooks even more than
they do now. On second thoughts, scrub
that no one is suggesting a drug so

It was a good row, but we are none the wiser. If it eventually comes to be proven

I am indebted to the *New Farmer and Grower* magazine—required reading for those who doubt organic is the way forward in farming—for reminding us that as long ago as 1923 the philosopher Rudolph Steiner wrote: "Consider a cow or an ox . . . What would happen if the ox were to eat meat directly instead

So here is my plea. Let us have this superdrug for all the benefits to memory and reasoning that it will bring. But do not try it out on the animals first. As last Monday's debate proved, there are far more urgent cases.

That's enough brains, thank you



PAUL HEINEY



Esme Kirby with her husband Peter at their farm, "The Valley of Many Streams": between them they have protected landmarks, cleared eyesores, planted trees, designed and built bridges and stiles, and created paths

Esmé Kirby, octogenarian protector of Snowdonia's charms, has her sights firmly set on a new target, says **Derwent May**

Mrs Kirby has done much to protect the beauties of Snowdonia and establish better public access to them. In her time, she has prevented the renowned Cromlech Boulders in the Llanberis Pass beneath Snowdon from being blown up during road-widening; has

Before the Second World War, as a young woman, she ran a riding school in Llandudno, where in those days the town where all the Manchester cotton-brokers had their homes. A young man named Thomas Furbank, who was a nephew of the writer Ronald Furbank, had bought the farm of Dyffryn Mynydd as an adventure, though he did not know much about farming. Later he was to write a very successful book about it called *I Bought a Mountain*. He saw Esmé in Llandudno and carried her off to the farm as his bride. Unfortunately, the marriage did not last long, but Thomas gave his young wife the farm. She has been there ever since, and farmed it on her own for more than 40 years. She is now, as a Welsh tenor

The first year's achievements included the public opening of the mountain path by the athlete Sir Chris Brasher, the repair — with the help of Forest Enterprise and Gwynedd County Council — of a boggy section of another mountain path near Traawstwydd, and the removal of Tarmac heap, old silage bags, and graffiti in many parts of Snowdonia. To help her, the trier has gathered a large band

This summer, too, many "tree weeds", as Mrs Kirby calls them, will be removed. By this she means the rampaging undergrowth on tree-lined roads that completely screens the view when it is in leaf. Again, by slow and steady persuasion of the local farmers the trust hopes to open up all the paths that encircle Snowden and to link them up with each other to form a reliable network.

● **Esmé Kirby Snowdonia Trust, Capel Curig, Betws-y-Coed, Gwynedd LL24 0ES**
Tel/Fax 01690 720234.

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Age Group	1990	1995	2000	2005
0-14	18	16	14	12
15-24	12	13	14	15
25-34	15	14	13	12
35-44	12	13	14	15
45-54	15	14	13	12
55-64	12	13	14	15
65-74	15	14	13	12
75+	12	13	14	15

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INTERNET: <http://www.goldandsilver.co.uk>

From the days when the smelter set on the British Empire comes this small group of 22 carat British Victorian Shield design gold sovereigns from the earliest years of Victoria's reign. These have recently been released for distribution by a leading European bank.

Less than 400 of these superb grade original gold sovereigns have been released for distribution in Great Britain. The coins date from the 1840's to the early 1880's and are of the sought after Shield Design, showing the young head of Queen Victoria. Bearing in mind these genuine British gold coins are getting on for nearly 150 years old and weighing just over a quarter of an ounce (7.98 grams) of 22 carat gold, these will be a big hit with collectors and gold fans alike.

When you consider that one leading coin retailer charges £195.00 each for identical coins, and that all Victorian gold sovereigns that have come from the Royal Mint since 1838 have exactly the same weight and gold purity, these must represent outstanding value at only £109.50 each, including secure delivery.

In fact, just recently the Royal Mint has been selling ordinary modern Q.E.II decimal gold sovereigns from the Gulf War at £195.00 each which are accompanied by a certificate of authenticity. As many satisfied clients of the G.S.B. can already confirm, the Gold & Silver Bureau absolutely guarantees every gold coin that passes through their hands for its quality and 100% authenticity. Genuine British gold coins that are nearly a century and a half old will be cherished forever by gold collectors, historians and antique lovers everywhere.

I've applied for three and asked for different dates. Also available are deluxe single coin presentation cases, priced at just £3.95 each.

You should try your luck who knows? You could win one of the lucky ones who part in this distribution. You apply by post, stating the money you would like, along with name and address including postcode to The Gold and Silver Bureau, 3 Sevenways, 1 Essex, K22-6XH. If you are not enough to be allocated any, you will be put on the list. After all, very few people get to see an original Victorian sovereign, let alone to own one.

If you want to apply for a 'phone and don't mind engaged tones, call the Freephone (800) 614688 on a Sunday. The Gold & Silver Bureau can also be reached on (0181) 551-8333, you can't go out right away whether you be successful in obtaining one. You can also fax your application to (0181) 539-4311. Do not pay any payment initially, you are notified if you are one of the lucky ones whose application succeeded. You can also use the cost by using one of the flexible plastic friends MasterCard or Visa.

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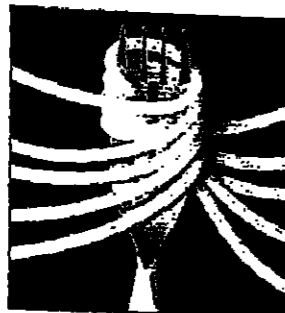
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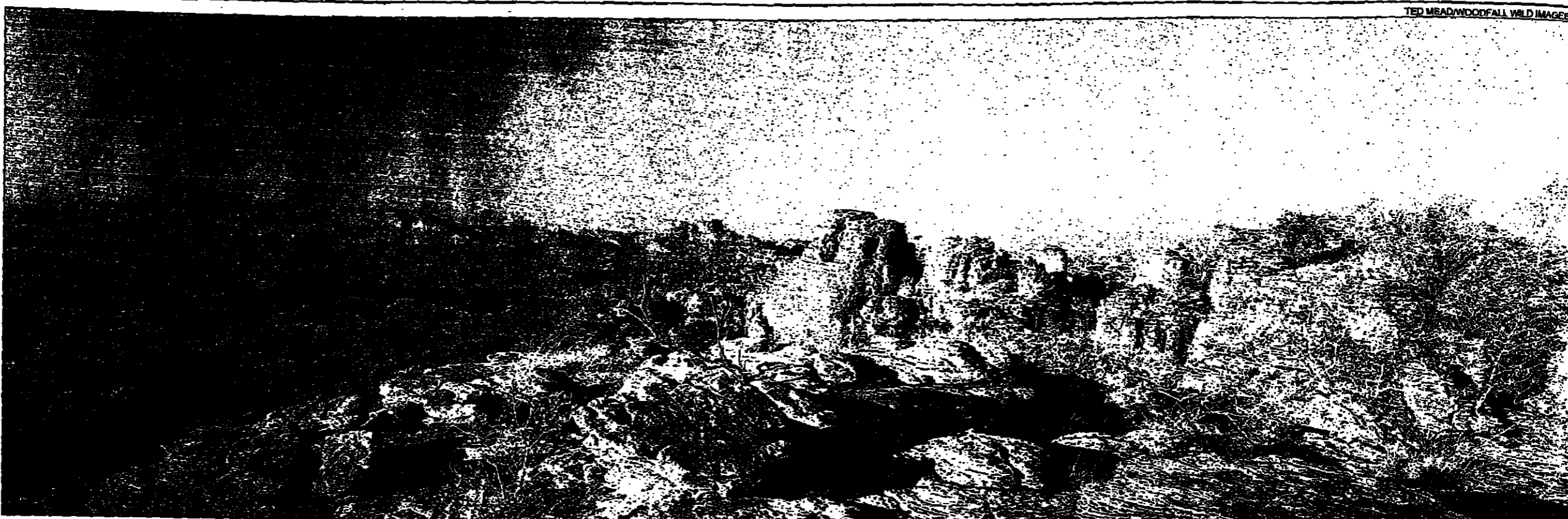
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The East Alligator escarpment in Kakadu (above) guards a wilderness of stunning beauty containing a multitude of wildlife in the swamps of the Yellow Waters (below) and sustaining the ancient hunting lifestyle of the Aborigines

They take crocodiles seriously in the top end of Australia, particularly the estuarine saltwater beasts, the "salties" of film fame. These can grow to 30-odd feet, live to be 100 years old and can take a buffalo and, holding him by the nose, drag him under the water.

Not that any human has actually been taken by a croc in the Northern Territories since 1987. But with a couple of dozen saltwater and freshwater crocs to every kilometre (or "ks" as the Australians call them) and some 100 fished out of Darwin Harbour alone during the year, nobody is taking any chances.

Nor can they afford to. The hunters and the farmers may rage against the "greenies" and their conservation policy that preserves all the nasties. But the quarter-million tourists and backpackers come mainly for the wildlife.

And what a wildlife there is. Kakadu National Park to the south of Darwin is the largest wetlands conservation area in the world, a park the size of Wales with the complete ecology of the estuarine system from mangrove swamps to paper-bark gum trees (surely one of the most beautiful and diverse species of tree in the world) to rainforest, woodland and granite ranges.

We were there at the end of the dry season in October when the water had retreated to the main rivers and a series of permanent lakes, or billabongs, around which the wildlife concentrated in astonishing proximity and abundance. The locals argue that the wet season, when the plains are flooded and everything is unbelievably green and growing, is even more beautiful, even if the wildlife is more dispersed.

To add to all this — an intrinsic part of it, indeed — there is the Aboriginal art, painted with ochre, spontaneity, surprise and mystery on innumerable caves and the rock overhangs of the escarpment that confines the estuary.

Up a gum tree in croc country

Australia's 'Top End' is one of the last truly unspoilt wildernesses in the world. Adrian Hamilton samples the serenity of life by the billabong



al system. Some of the paintings are more than 20,000 years old according to the guides — as much as 150,000 according to new discoveries and dating techniques announced last autumn. This caused considerable doubt in the academic community and an outburst of nationalist fervour in the press, eager to reaffirm not just Australia's uniqueness but also its superiority in age and progress to Europe.

The prehistoric and the indigenous — flora, fauna and ancient culture — are what Australian eco-tourism is all about, particularly in the Northern Territories which is trying to build its holiday trade on a total view of environmental or "interpretive" tourism.

Only opened up to exploration within this century and to settlement much more recently, the "Top End" remains still an unspoilt wilderness trod for literally tens of thousands of years by one of the most ancient peoples in the world. What makes Australia so exciting, is that their way of hunting and gathering are still going on — just.

You can turn your head from examining startlingly fresh rock paintings of sickle humans and carefully delineated geese and snakes and then look out across the plains, the forests of dozens of different species of eucalyptus (Australia has more than 200) and the bird-filled billabongs. They are unaltered since the original painters had marked the spot and signalled the game in prehistoric times.

You can also look around and see a people pushed aside by a Western tide that has destroyed their social units, introduced them to alcohol with devastating results and made them subject to a degree

of racial prejudice of quite astonishing openness among the older Australian Whites.

Guilt and new appreciation have led in Australia to the development of a policy of environmental correctness and retrospective recompense that is sometimes bizarre in its consequences. The Northern Territories is inhabited by less than 1 per cent of Australia's population, some 175,000 people, and covers a sixth of its land with an area the size of Britain and France combined. Of that nearly half is owned by the Aborigines.

Most of the wilderness at the Top End belongs to the local peoples and is leased to the government national parks administration and tourist operators. They bring in the visitors whose fees are then used to keep the Aborigines in a dependency economy, meant to preserve their hunting and gathering lifestyles free of the corruption that money always brings. Kakadu is owned by

the Aborigines and shaped like a crocodile. But for a long time its largest hotel, the Gagudju in the uranium mining town of Jabiru, would not allow Aborigines into the dining room because their dress and habits upset the guests.

Anyone is allowed into the Kakadu and other national parks so long as they keep away from sacred sites and forbidden art locations. Only a few, and then at a price, are allowed into the surrounding Aboriginal tribal lands.

The masses visit the national parks in camper vans or just with sleeping bags or "swags", and plenty of water (essential in the hot season and don't wade into the billabongs to refill if you don't want to become lunch for a saltil). The wealthier stay in the luxury hotels and — particularly if they are American or German — fish in areas where conservation policies have made the game plentiful and ready to be caught.

Seven Spirit Bay, a luxury hotel on the Cobourg Peninsula at the northern tip of Arnhem Land, for example, has octagonal open-sided bedrooms under open sky that fulfil every dream of melding into the wilderness. On the other hand, it can only be reached by small aircraft and costs more than £200 per person a day (night visit). As a multimillionaire septuagenarian complained: how could they restrict his luggage to get on the biplane? After much argument, he left three suitcases but insisted on bringing one essential piece of equipment — his exercise bike.

And yet you stay at the hotel was idyllic — good food, well organised walks, fine views of the sea. Oh, how one longed for a quick dip if one could only brave the crocs or the killer box jellyfish that come in for the wet season.

There are plenty who will tell you with a knowing nod how the is in going to the Aboriginal Arnhem Land and the tribal areas that surround Kakadu. But then you would miss the glories of the wetlands and Kakadu, a huge area with plenty of space to roam and — like American national parks — a ranger system that is there for the ordinary citizen. There is no snobbery among Australians. The backpacker is well catered for.

However, if you can afford the time and the money to take a trip into Arnhem Land with the small number of four-wheel-drive tours that take up

most of the visitor permits, then you are in for something very special. Arnhem Land is huge and empty, the silence is full of bird cries and animal sounds and you are all alone with the spirit and culture of the place, able to visit art and billabong in an eerie peace.

The number of truly indigenous Aborigines in the area can be numbered in hundreds, perhaps a few thousand at most, in a country the size of Scotland, so the "native guides" who accompany you on tours or walks are usually from other states and are

rarely pure Aboriginal. The guide on the East Alligator River turned out to be from the Tiwi islands with an English father and a half-Philippine mother — but he was very good, none the less.

It pays, and costs, to try to enter into the spirit of Australia, for all that most Australians live in cities or their suburbs. Darwin is an exciting town, half-backpacker, half-California style new marina, with some international-class hotels like the Beaufort on the esplanade, some good restaurants and wonderful

sunsets. But it is for the outback that one comes to Australia — particularly in the Northern Territories.

This state stretches from the tropics in the north to the "red heart" of central Australia at Alice Springs, a couple of thousand miles south. Staying on the land is the only way to feel it.

Down in the south we stayed in Bond Springs Station, a century-old, 750,000-acre property outside Alice Springs. Here the round-up is done by helicopter; the boilerman had been flown up from Melbourne to install the Aga shipped directly from England (within a few hours he had embarked on a fling with the girl from the abattoir); the election officials had come with a portable cardboard voting booth to make sure everyone did their democratic duty (the right-wing National Party candidate was an Aboriginal made good in the prison service and was objecting to more handouts for his people); and the guide on a breathtaking night of bird-watching was a former Gurkha officer from Zimbabwe.

However, the other property we stayed in at El Questro Station, in the north of Western Australia, was a luxury

homestead on a million-acre ranch owned by an Old Eltonian. You could stay in accommodation ranging from tents to cabins or the owner's ranch house perched spectacularly above a gorge. The landscape was red rock, with scattered minerals (you can chip away in what they call "fossicking" where there is a permit), hot springs and the primeval shapes of the baobab tree.

The property's "native guide" turned out to be a highly decorated part-Afghan veteran of the Vietnam War and the cattle driver called Buddy with a pair of bowled legs you could drive a "mob" of cows through. A genuine stockman, he made his living by appearing in rodeos with two six-shooters or a whip (the Genuine Aboriginal Cowboy from Australia) as they billed him in the United States) and also modelling jeans in fashion shoots.

"They had us there, me and three models" he recalled, pointing to a big rock in the river. "And the photographer said 'Buddy, for heaven's sake don't tell the girls there's crocs in the river'. So I said nothing as the girls splashed in the water. But I did make sure my mate kept a rifle under a blanket close by."

"I told him: 'If anything moves in the water, don't wait. Just blast it.' By God, they were angry when I told them about it after."

The author was a guest of the Northern Territory Tourist Commission.

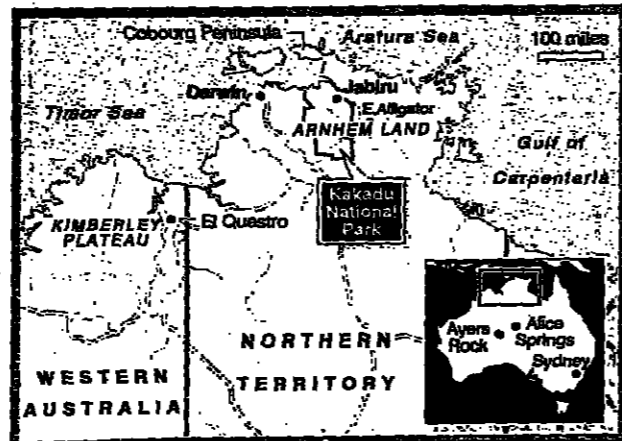
NORTHERN TERRITORIES FACT BOX

■ Northern Territory Tourist Commission, Beaumont House, Lambton Road, London SW20 0LW (0181-944 2952).

■ The Travel Portfolio, Limited, 73 Churchgate Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 1RL (01284 76225), offers tailor-made tours to northern Australia; example, ten days from £922 per person, based on two sharing, including economy flights and three-star hotels.

■ Singapore Airlines (0181-747 0007) flies from London to Darwin, via Singapore, from £704. Qantas (0345 747767) flies from London to Darwin via Singapore from £757.

■ Bus and four-wheel-drive tours can be arranged by the Darwin Region Tourist Association, 35 South Street Mall (089 814 300). Kakadu Air Services, Darwin, runs flights to Kakadu and tours, including one-day tours into Arnhem Land. Stays in Arnhem Land can be organised in Darwin from about AS\$300 (£141) a night.



■ Accommodation at Seven Spirit Bay (89 790 277) costs from AS\$299 per person a night in high season (April 1-Oct 31) or from AS\$249 low season (Nov 1-Mar 31). Includes three meals a day and cost of an access permit to Aboriginal lands.

■ El Questro resort, PO Box 904, Kununurra, Western Australia 6743 (0191 614 318) costs AS\$640 per person a night at the homestead, AS\$60 in the bungalow base and AS\$45 in tented cabin accommodation at the Emma Gorge Resort. Tours, and fishing trips extra.

■ Prices at Ayers Rock are from AS\$233 per room at the Outback Pioneer Hotel to AS\$334 for a standard room at the Luxury Sails in the Desert Hotel (Ayers Rock Resort Central Reservations, Sydney 2360 9099). Scenic flights, AS\$60.

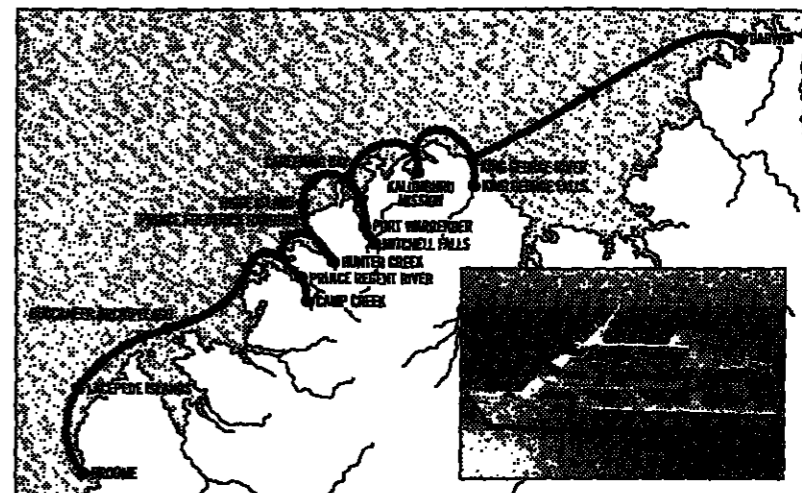
■ The Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: Australia — Northern Territory Aboriginal Art, by Wally Carrara (Thames and Hudson, £6.95).

■ The Songlines, by Bruce Chatwin (Picador, £6.99). Northern Territory (Lonely Planet, £8.99).



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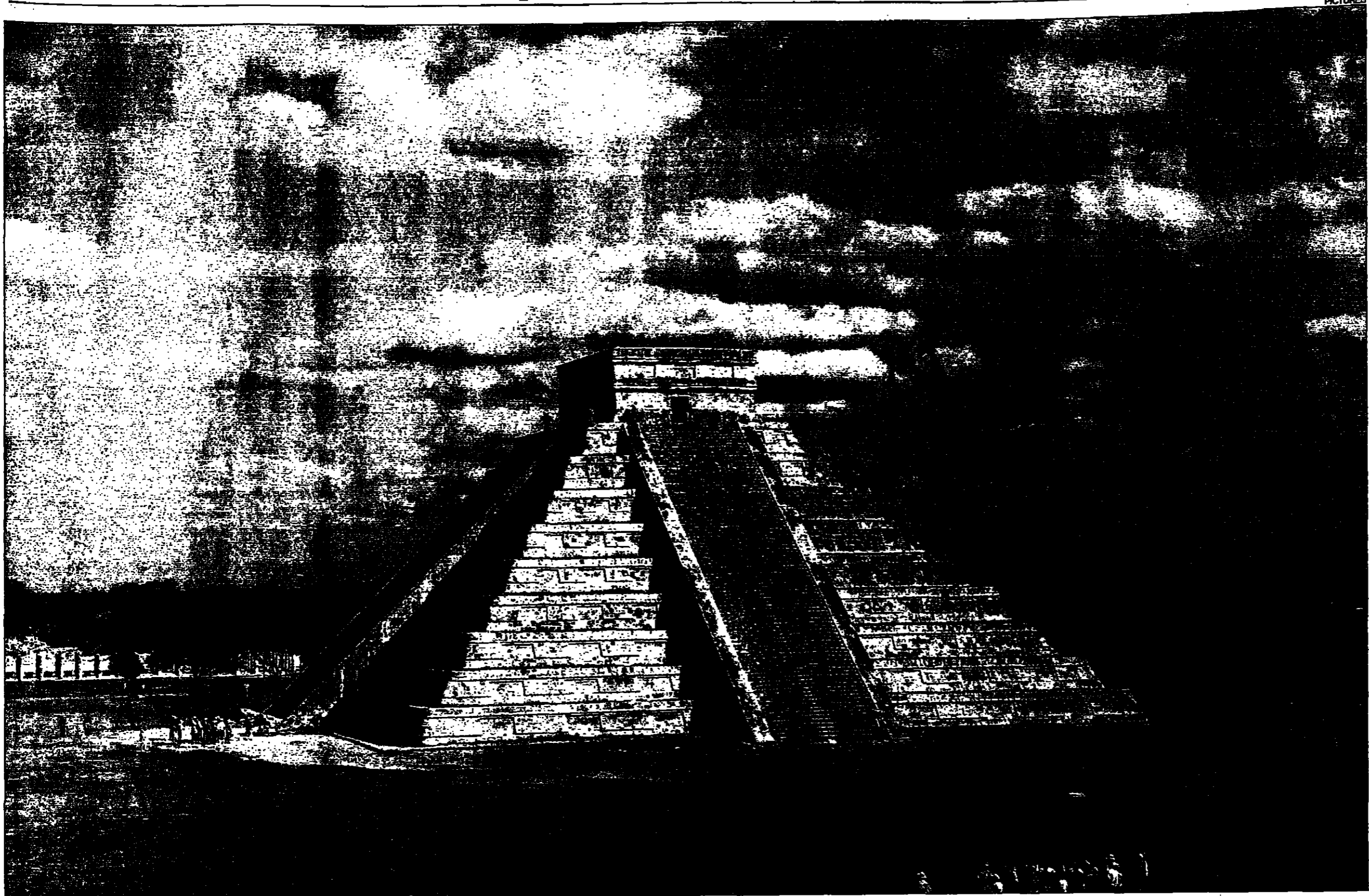
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Mexico: At sea, treasures of the reef Jacques Cousteau revealed; on land, ancient architectural heritage...



The temple at Chichén Itzá, the greatest testament to Mayan expertise in mathematics, astronomy, sculpture, architecture, and construction, was an the principal place of pilgrimage for Mayas from throughout Central America

Diving with the god of the Mayas

COZUMEL FACT FILE

Continental Airlines (0800 776464) flies to Cozumel via an overnight stop in Houston from £605 return. British Airways (0345 222111) flies from Heathrow or Gatwick to Miami (overnight stop) from £367 return connecting with Mexicana Airways to Cozumel from £154 return.

The Hotel Presidente Inter-Continental (0345 581444 local rate in UK) is Cozumel's only five-star hotel. Its 1997 charges are from £58 per room, including tax. Lower priced hotels are found in the island's only town. Check with the Mexican Tourist Office (0171-734 1059) for details.

Global Travel Club (01268 541732) custom designs holidays in the Yucatan from £1,345 per person for seven days to £1,800 for 14 days, depending on standard of accommodation and services required. Flying from the UK, Cathy Mathos Mexican Tourist/Mexicana Airlines (0171-254 2550) also offers personalised Yucatan tours from £1,200.

According to Mayan legend the Caribbean island of Cozumel 12 miles off Mexico's Yucatan peninsula was the home of Ixchel, goddess of love and fertility. Today, it is better known for spectacular diving around the world's second largest coral reef. Above the water, equally spectacular Mayan pyramids and temples are no more than a couple of hours travelling time away.

When I walked through the door of the secluded Hotel Presidente Inter-Continental the concierge greeted me 'by name with a glass of champagne. This is something I could become accustomed to. Below my bedroom's first-floor balcony a *xto kaah*, a blackbird with a long black beak, anorexic body and long tail, squawks and struts on long spindly legs across a palm-fringed powdery white beach and over to the large swimming pool with connected Jacuzzi, from which it proceeds to drink.

The range and quality of the food in the hotel's two restaurants — the indoor El Arrecife, with panoramic views of the turquoise Caribbean, and the beachside El Caribeño, sheltered beneath a roof thatched with the *hucano* palm to form a Mayan *palapa* — puncture the first of many preconceptions about Mexico, its limited cuisine. So do the national wines.

But the main attraction for visitors is the reefs, revealed by Jacques Cousteau in 1954. Clemente, one of the PADI divemasters of Scubadu, which operates out of the hotel, suggested I didn't need a wetsuit for the dive to the Santa Rosa Wall. These Mexicans are some tough guys, thought I, it just has to be cold that far down. Wrong again on the second count.

After a 40-minute boat ride from one of the hotel's two piers, we dropped into water with a temperature of 86°F: 90ft below it was only four degrees cooler, warmer than my local



A fisherman hauls in his catch offshore at Yucatan

indoor heated swimming pool. The visibility is so good that the surface seems tantalisingly close, and then you glide over the edge of a white sandy plateau to peer down a vertical wall that disappears into an abyss 3,000ft deep. It's the nearest to a space walk that I've experienced.

The top 10ft of the wall is coral reef riddled with caves, grottoes, and tunnels. Accompanied by large inquisitive yellow-finned and black groupers, we rode the current to explore stunning coral buttresses, still vividly coloured even at this depth. Inside the caves, our torches illuminated giant sea fans amid purple vase, yellow tube, and brown rope sponges, while one long narrow tunnel was lined with blood red sponges.

The second of the two-tank dives took us to the Paradise

cape purple ferns waving in the wind, and a host of others. I stopped to examine a pillar coral, and the first nine inches of a spotted moray emerged snake-like from beneath a ledge and snapped its sharp teeth at my hand.

Each dive is different. All provide a multitude of multicoloured and multi-shaped fishes, corals and sponges. Even snorkelling ten yards out from the hotel beach showed a greater variety of marine life in 20 minutes than had a week's diving in the Aegean Sea. And for those who don't want to wet their feet, a trip in a glass-bottomed boat provides the next best experience.

You can use the air-conditioned luxury of the hotel as a base from which to visit all the principal Mayan sites by day trip. But I opted for a guided tour of the Yucatan peninsula which began at Tulum, the only walled city by the sea that the Mayas built. Its most impressive building is the Castillo, a limestone pyramid topped by a temple, which perches on the highest point on the peninsula, a bluff about 40ft above the beach. The region is very flat.

A recurring motif carved on many of the city's 60 buildings is a god whose legs project from above his head. This is referred to as the Diving God, or the God Descending from

the Sky, or the God of Bird, or... Interpretations of Mayan origins and culture equal the number of investigating archaeologists multiplied by the number of surviving Mayas. This is due primarily to Fray Diego de Landa, second Bishop of Yucatan. With the enlightenment of a Franciscan conquistador, Landa realised that the snake venerated by the Mayas was none other than the serpent who tempted Eve to sin in Paradise. And so he set about exterminating all Mayan writings and traces of their history, and religion.

Fortunately, he failed to destroy the greatest testament to Mayan expertise in mathematics, astronomy, sculpture, architecture, and construction. Chichén Itzá was the principal place of pilgrimage for some 200 Mayan settlements scattered across the Yucatan, Guatemala, Belize, and northern Honduras, although by the 10th century it was dominated by more warlike Toltecs from central Mexico.

A singular advantage of staying at a hotel near Chichén Itzá is that you have about two hours to wander over the site before the coachloads of day trippers arrive. At quarter past eight in the morning I stood alone in the temple of the plumed serpent, Kukulcan, which is

built on top of a pyramid made of nine stacked square platforms of decreasing size such that the slope of the pyramid is exactly 45 degrees.

Below me, two eagles glided over the carpet of jungle that stretches to the horizon in every direction, pierced to the south by the white limestone dome of the Observatory. To the west of the clearing at the foot of the pyramid lies the Temple of the Jaguars, attached to one of the two long, high parallel walls that form the Ball Court. To the east the Temple of the Warriors stands atop a pyramid that rises from the Terrace of a Thousand Columns. And to the north a straight limestone path cuts through the jungle to the Sacred Well, into which sacrificial victims were cast.

From this vantage point it is easy to imagine the power of the priests over the throngs of Mayan pilgrims below, especially at the spring and autumn equinoxes. At sunset on these days the northwestern terraced edge of the pyramid casts an undulating shadow which joins the sculpted serpent's tail at the top of the northern ramp to the serpent's head at the bottom: Kukulcan is descending from his temple.

JOHN HANDS

• The author was a guest of Inter-Continental Hotels.

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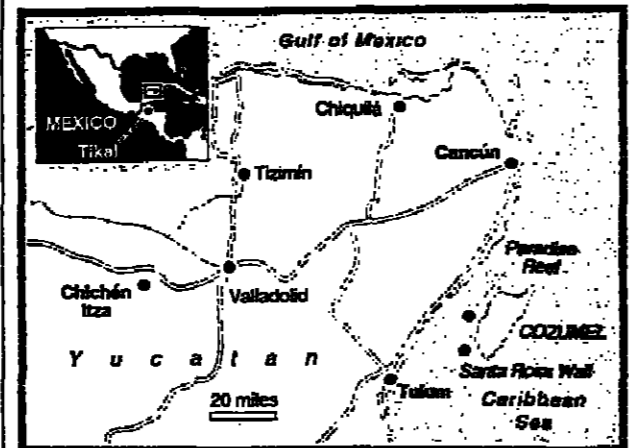
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... exotica at mealtimes in the southern state of Oaxaca; the pros and cons of taking a resort-style holiday

Crunch time at lunchtime

They lay heaped on the plate, fried to a dark reddish-brown. It had to be done — a spoonful sprinkled on the tortilla, then swamped with plenty of spicy guacamole, stringy cheese, anything else that might usefully disguise the taste.

If you want to return to Oaxaca, you must eat grasshopper. And after a couple of days in this enticing place there was no question. We chewed the chapulines (actually not bad) and moved on to the more mouthwatering items on the table.

Oaxaca — pronounced Wah-lah-ka — is a southeastern state of Mexico with the reputation of being culturally fascinating but a poor relation. The national Government worries about occasional rebellious eruptions, but visitors do not.

If your ideas of Mexico are largely confined to Zapata moustaches, revolutions and the writing of Graham Greene, you should not be put off. Greene may have hated Mexico's poverty and corruption but Oaxaca does not figure in his marvellous novel *The Power and the Glory*. Nonetheless when you enter the stupendous gold interior of the church of Santo Domingo and are exhorted to "remember the needy", the Catholic dilemmas of the novel come to mind.

"One of the most extravagantly gorgeous churches in the world," said Aldous Huxley. We just sat in the pews and gawped. A brief unseasonal shower fell outside and men working on the restoration of a dusty convent next door smiled. This was December and it was the first rain since August.

Oaxaca city, the eponymous capital of the state, is a delight at Christmas. The zocalo, or central square, is the focal point of the city — actually more of a middle-sized town, with no tall buildings or wide boulevards — and it buzzes at all hours with stallholders selling rugs, brightly painted wooden carvings, black pottery, leather goods, jewellery, hideous Natividad figures, steaming tamales and bewitching varieties of sweets. One man holding a very thin nib offers: "I write your name on a grain of rice" (irresistible for children with our surname). Women pass with trays piled high with *goyurias*, walnut and burnt sugar cakes.

Oaxaca is good at markets. Near the zocalo, around the Basílica de la Soledad, stalls stretch down steps, round corners, on and on, mixing with funfair rides. At the Plaza de la Danza, 30 flavours of ice cream were on sale.

Another day we headed off for the market of markets at Ocotlán, 20 miles out of Oaxaca city. Prices seem to be the same for tourists as for locals. People are friendly and do not get difficult if you do not buy. You can spend hours just walking and looking at the produce. Piles of bulging or emaciated chillies, dried hibiscus flowers, green-feathered toucan heads (the birds are trapped by putting glue on the trees), spring onions the size of billiard balls, goat skins. Even when I discovered that my



50 miles

wallet had been lifted it was not too upsetting. Back in Oaxaca that evening there was a Natividad procession in the zocalo led by a young Mary on a beautiful donkey. We crunched past the *bulwies* stalls — where you eat fried corn tortillas with a sweet sauce and chuck the bowl over your shoulder so it smashes on the ground as you make a wish — then got distracted by the dogdams.

In the distance a youthful brass band was massaging carols outside Santo Domingo. And the birthday *piñatas* were out for Jesus, so crowds gathered underneath these star-shaped decorations that were suspended above the street on a rope. A blindfolded volunteer has to whack the *piñata* with a stick until it smashes, then the goodies inside shower down and a screaming, laughing scrum forms. Our five-year-old retired battered and tearful after the first scramble. The six-year-old hid her time and got handfuls of sweets from sympathetic teenagers.

We returned to our marvellous hotel, the Camina Real, a beautifully converted convent and undoubtedly the place to stay in Oaxaca if your budget can stand it. In the hall an orchestra played; in the main courtyard the guitars of a mariachi band drifted up and serenaded the children to sleep.

Breakfasts at the Camina Real are a treat. You soon get used to putting away a plate of pork enchiladas, or perhaps *chilaquiles rojos* (reconstituted tortillas with tomato, pepper and sour cream). Not to forget a *tamale de mole*, wrapped corn cakes smothered in a dark, chocolatey sauce. *Mole*, an Oaxacan speciality, is a fantastically complex, spicy creation with up to 72 ingredients, including chocolate. This is thousands of miles from the Americanised Mexican food served in Britain. Every morning Leonor would make tortillas on the griddle, while Plutarco cooked the eggs or bacon if you were feeling unadventurous.

Monte Alban, a few miles to the west, is the most impressive archaeological site, a plateau created by levelling the top of a hill as long ago as 500 BC and creating a sacred site. Oaxaca state is mostly mountainous, but here three valleys converge. A sacrificial victim in his final moments could look out from here and have a view to die for.

All the buildings sit directly facing or at right-angles to each other except one, presumed to be an observatory, stuck obstinately at 45 degrees. Under the blazing sun Mario, our guide, drew in the dust with a pointed stick and explained in diagrams how the angles, dates, equinoxes and solstices are perfectly built into the architecture.

A few yards away carvings of hunchbacks, breech births and hydrocephalic heads suggested an early medical school. There are some dark underground tombs — Number 104 is impressive with its frescoes and maize god over the entrance. A torch would have



A sophisticated carving at Monte Alban



Zapotec Indians in Oaxaca state prepare flowers for a colourful *posadas*, or procession, to celebrate Christmas

been handy. This is essentially a Zapotec site (discovering the layers of pre-Hispanic history and the differences between the 16 existing ethnic groups is one of the pleasures of visiting Oaxaca). It was at its peak between about AD 300 and 700, but deserted by the time the Spanish arrived in 1521.

Compare this with the remains of religious sites in Mitla, a few miles to the east, where the *conquistadores*, in a crude gesture of domination, made the native Indians build a church over their temple and forced them to worship the Christian God. Only later did archaeologists discover that the Indians had placed their own idols inside the walls.

Yugal is another splendid site, if your appetite for ruins is still sharp, with its large restored ball court. In this amazing sporting ritual, dating back at least 1,500 years, a game of five-a-side was played between two teams, the idea apparently being to keep the ball in the air using convenient hips, elbows, knees and shoulders. The stakes were high. Either the winning or the losing captain (depends who you talk to) was sacrificed.

Our guide offered the view that it must have been the winners who were sacrificed. He bases his theory on today's Mexican athletes who, in the Olympic Games in Atlanta, did not win any gold medals, presumably through fear of having their hearts cut out. A week was not enough in

OAXACA FACT FILE

- The author travelled to Mexico City via Madrid on Iberia (0171-830 0011). Return flights from Heathrow via Madrid cost £407 plus tax until July 14, then £538. British Airways (0345 222111) flies to Mexico City for £439 plus tax until March 20, then £655.
- Internal flights from Mexico City to Oaxaca city cost £108 return. Oaxaca to Huatulco £89 return.
- Where to stay: Camina Real hotel, Calle 5 de Mayo 300, 68000 Oaxaca (double room from £98 plus 17 per cent tax). Hotel Hostal de La Natividad, Ave Hidalgo 918. Attractive, good atmosphere, central location (double from US\$32 plus tax).
- Cox and Kings (0171-873 5000) has a Land of the Maya 13-day tour, including three days in Oaxaca, starting at £1,795. Journey Latin America (0181-747 8315) does escorted group trips (a 14-night trip, including Oaxaca, costs from £1,640 per person in a twin room) or individually tailored itineraries.
- Kuoni's (01306 742223) Mexico Panorama is an 11-day escorted tour, including two nights in Oaxaca, and an additional four nights in Cancun or Playa del Carmen, from £1,598.
- Where to eat: La Casa de la Abuela in the Oaxaca zocalo. Specialises in moles, red, yellow and black. El Patio, between Teotitlán and Mitla. New restaurant in courtyard. Excellent *espanada* (chicken in yellow mole).
- Best museums in Oaxaca city: Museo Regional de Oaxaca next to Santo Domingo (brilliant Mixtec treasures). Museo Rufino Tamayo (pre-Hispanic artefacts).
- Tourist office in Oaxaca: (00 52 951) 4 29 37 Mexican Ministry of Tourism, 60-b1 Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 5DS (0171-734 1058).
- Essential: take a pocket Spanish dictionary.

Oaxaca. We had watched the local liquor, *mescal*, being made and drunk it with a salt and worm mixture; seen a *guelaguetza* (folk dance festival); bought rugs at Teotitlán (recommended); and taken in various fine museums. We were off to Huatulco, on the Oaxaca coast, for some sand and sea. The children were happy ("not another market"). We did not want to leave. But at least, thanks to the grasshoppers, we would be back.

TIMOTHY RICE

■ The author was a guest of the Mexican Ministry of Tourism.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 27

ASHRAM

(c) In India, a place of religious retreat, sanctuary, or hermitage. Hence *ashramite*, an occupant of an ashram. From the Sanskrit *āśrama* a near, towards + *śrama* exertion, earnest endeavour. "The traditional ashram is built of wattle and mud, and its roofs are of leaves."

DOSSY

(b) Stylish, smart. Hence *dossily*. Cf. the Scottish *doss* neat, spruce, dapper, neat, a well-dressed person. "What with the ladies' bonnets and blokes' dossy hats."

GOMPA

(b) A Tibetan temple or monastery. From the Tibetan and Jäschke *gdon-pa*, a solitary place, a hermitage. "The monastery is named in Tibetan *Gön-pa*, vulgarly *Göm-pa*, or a solitary place or hermitage; and most monasteries are situated at least some distance off from villages."

BUCKEEN

(a) A female aboriginal Indian in Guiana. From the Guiana Dutch *bokin*, the female of *bok* a goat or buck. "They called her a *buckeen*; how much prettier than the word squaw."

High-rise horrors

Cancun is a holiday resort on the eastern fringes of Mexico's Yucatán peninsula. There, on a narrow skell of land ribboning between turquoise seas and a soupy lagoon, vast hotels have descended like spaceships. At night, under the splintered stars of a tropical sky, they glimmer eerily, casting a sickly light over the dark waters. By day they hum with the hustle of the tourist trade. The palm-thatched villages of Yucatán's native culture have been erased. Mexican traditions have been ransacked and drained almost dry.

Downtown Cancun is like some time-trapped land where every night can be Saturday. It bristles with restaurants and nightclubs, discos and bars. You can dine on food from almost any part of the world from Portugal to Polynesia. But it is the stamp of the United States which is strongest. Mexican food, where you can find it, is good. Small cafés offer an economical *comida corrida* (set lunch) where spicy Yucatán dishes such as *pollo pibil* (chicken cooked in banana leaves) or succulent fresh seafood are served with side dishes of chile, avocado and tortillas.

Native Mayan culture has been reduced to a consumer commodity in Cancun. Its last tawdry remains linger amid the tourist tat of shopping malls: silver jewellery and woven blankets, carved wooden masks and painted pottery. However, a short drive away the ruined cities of a pre-Hispanic people can still be found, as unearthy in their own way as Cancun.

It is best to get to Chichén Itzá early in the morning. From about 10am, coachloads of other visitors begin to arrive. Overnight Texans haul themselves up the temple stairways like weight-writhers on some Mayan Stepmaster. One can imagine the ancient past when files of Maya priests in feather head-dresses would zigzag slowly to the pinnacles of sacred pyramids. Then, to the faithful who worshipped from afar, they would look like the great plumed serpent Quetzalcoatl. The only plumed serpent I saw was on the road back. A vast python had been crushed by a coach. Vultures were already devouring it.

RACHEL CAMPBELL-JOHNSTON

■ The author was a guest of *Sunset Holidays*



Cancun: Mexican traditions have been ransacked

Or try Huatulco

The guidebooks described Huatulco, the beach resort on the south coast of Oaxaca state, as "the new Cancun". Mexico may be the destination for 1997, but Huatulco is earmarked as its resort of the millennium. The setting is beautiful, as the Mexican government noticed when it decided that Huatulco was the latest big project: nine bays, ripe for development over the next two decades. But today the comparison with Cancun is way off the mark. The hotels (only a handful so far, all upmarket) are no higher than six storeys. The water is clean. There are only 1,832 rooms in the whole resort.

There has been no mad scramble to build. Access to Huatulco is difficult. There is an airport but the road down from Oaxaca is tortuous and takes seven hours. A large road is planned but may be years away. Also, foreign investment has not been as enthusiastic as was hoped. When you ask who is building the next hotel, the director of development smiles and shrugs.

Huatulco is not for people who are interested in Mexico. Apart from indifferent shopping in La Cruzcilla or Santa Cruz (both new towns), you are in international country and likely to have chosen it for the high-quality hotels, beaches and activities. There are no historic sites within close range.

We stayed at the comfortable Royal Maeva, a sort of glorified Club Med, where at Christmas 60 per cent of guests were Canadian, 20 per cent were American and most of the rest Mexican or Guatemalan. For all-inclusive rates you get room, food, drink and activities, including tennis, snorkelling, scuba diving, sailing and windsurfing. The food was pleasant but bland after the delights of proper Mexican cuisine in somewhere like Oaxaca city. The staff were superb. The sun blazed down.

The children, from infants to teenagers, adored it. The adults enjoyed themselves too, but would have preferred somewhere more Mexican and less purpose-built. West along the coast is Puerto Escondido, a complete contrast — more Mexican, more interesting. The Santa Fe hotel is the place to stay, overlooking Zicatela Beach. Along the coast at Mazunte is a successful turtle research and conservation centre (turtles lay thousands of eggs along this coast) and Maniátepec lagoon is a peaceful getaway.

TIMOTHY RICE

■ Royal Maeva, PO Box 277, Bahías de Huatulco, Oaxaca 70989, Mexico. Until April 6, a double room costs US\$120 per person per day, all-inclusive. Variable according to season.

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مذا من رلاصل

Jane Reed finds that life is never too short to stuff a mushroom during a cookery course in southern Italy

Lessons from pasta masters

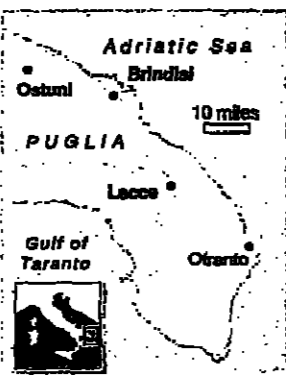
So you want all that way just to buy this Italian cookbook? said the nephew, flicking through it dismissively. It was Sunday. As usual I was cooking lunch at home for him, the niece, the wives, boyfriends, their friends and as many of the family who were up.

I opened the oven door and a gust of steam filled the kitchen. "Well? What is it then?" said one, sniffing the air. "Agnello e patate al forno." There was a pause. "That's just roast lamb and potatoes," said the one who did a GCSE in menu Italian. "Yes," I said.

Well, it was. But I hoped they would notice the difference. This was a Puglian-style roast lamb and potatoes, a dish of the region of Puglia which I had just visited on a week's cookery course at great expense with one of the nieces and an old friend.

I had to admit that what was on the serving plate didn't look exactly cordon bleu. Puglian food is rustic, no doubt about it. No towers of mousselines, elegant jus or coulis. This was just cubes of lean lamb that fall apart at the touch of a fork, with chunks of waxy, roasted potatoes, little roasted tomatoes, breadcrumbs, grated pecorino, finely chopped fresh oregano, rosemary and flat-leaf parsley, the obligatory drizzle of olive oil, some white wine and water, in the oven for a little over an hour. "Now that's what I call local culture," sighed the niece's partner, who as of this minute will inherit my entire fortune. "You can keep all the museums, galleries and churches. This is what you go abroad for."

I suppose the success of a cookery-course holiday has to be judged by the quality of the subsequent eating. If so, this holiday was a triumph. With



FACT FILE

Italian Cookery Weeks, PO Box 2482, London NW10 1HW (0171-401 8763/0181-208 0112). Courses are held in Umbria between May 11 and July 29 and in Puglia between Aug 24 and Oct 2. There are 16-20 places available each week and group and single bookings are welcome. The cost is £1,055pp, including return flights from London, seven nights' accommodation, food and wine, a one-day excursion, airport transfers in Italy for £925 excluding flights).

praise like that — and more for the *pesche ripiene*, made by the niece who travelled with me — you tend to forgive things like no hot water, not enough hands-on cooking or explanation about the region. And yes, I would have liked to know more about Puglia in the heel of Italy and its contents because it was different. Olive groves from the distant hills to the water's edge: stone walls, small fields, more olives. It's not as developed as it would be farther north. The Puglian mentality centres on *domani* — they

prefer siestas to building Sheratons. (Or mending the shower in my bathroom, come to that.)

Ostuni, the nearest small town to our course, was the typical old and new town mix: half Moorish fortification, half Harlow New Town. It was September, the temperature in the 70s, and technically out of season. We tried to blend unobtrusively into a warm, wet Wednesday afternoon to watch the town wake from its siesta around 4.30; we jumped out of the way of the armada of boy students on Lambrettas racing out of school, the beautiful young girls giggling as they go by; we downed an espresso with a slice of *torta di ricotta* at the corner coffee bar. Living the life. Or pretending to. I have often wondered if Italian holidaymakers hang out in Truro or Slough trying nonchalantly to look British.

On Saturday morning you mill around in the impressive market in Ostuni among the wonderful food stalls, trays of fresh, white ricotta, yellow-gold wheels of local cheese they encourage you to taste before buying; ten tubs of different olives, of capers in salt or wine vinegar, long red chillies, big yellow-green peppers, tomatoes — still dusty from the vine. We bought far more than we could consume or give away.

And who were we? What sort of people go on cookery courses in southern Italy? The niece had money on the fact that she would be the youngest on the course by 20 years — and she lost.

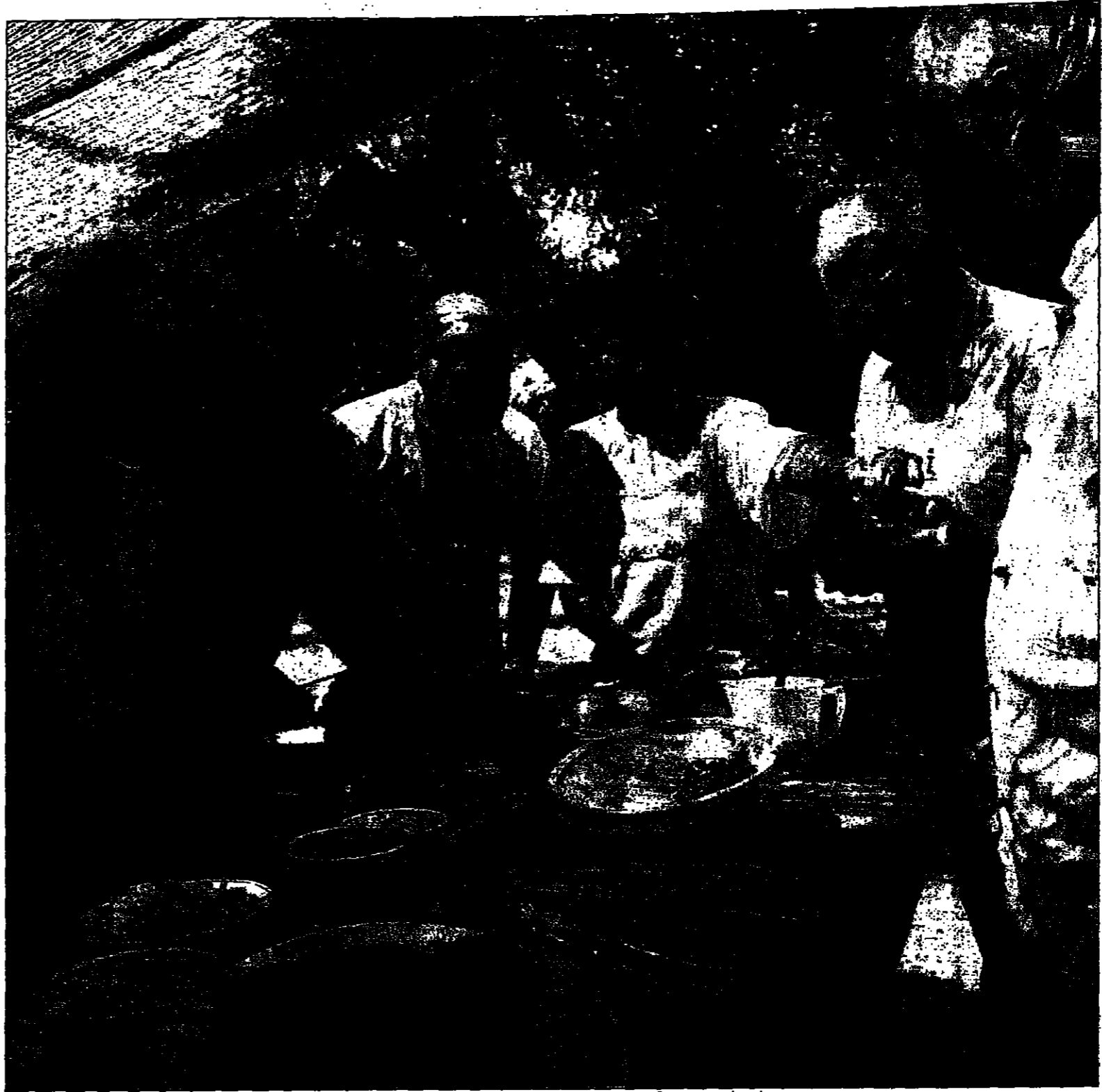
And the friend and I expected it would be all women — and it wasn't. There was Betty and her daughters, of course. Betty, 76, is very pretty, tall and slim with thick white, bobbed hair, and this was her third time in Puglia.

The young Scottish couple were accountant and systems analyst respectively. They tried to look the room beautifully photographed in the brochure for the course at La Spagnola, but discovered it was used exclusively by Susanna Gelmetti, the course's inspiration and executive cook. They were disappointed and would have taken off after a few days had we not all got on so well.

There were two rather similar, attractive couples from the home counties. They knew a lot about cooking and eating out. They had productive gardens and went on mushroom- and truffle-hunting weeks. One of the husbands broke out of the mould and joined the "boys behaving badly" group, about which more later.

Then there were the Swedish ladies from Wimbledon and Malmo, and the retired headmistress, Elizabeth, who we all called Myrtle (don't ask).

Eighteen of us in all, with some common threads. We were all interested in food, liked cooking, and clearly knew rather a lot about it: liked eating out and could



Recipe for success: cookery enthusiasts listen attentively as a guest chef shows them the tricks of the trade, using ingredients they bought themselves



Lecce's many charms include a splendid rococo cathedral

swap restaurants and recipes. So watching Susanna, press *pate suore* into cake tins for half an hour on the first evening left us all a little flat. But with that unquenchable British spirit, we made light of it in a mustn't-grumble sort of way.

We made light of the many small irritations of any holiday; we laughed a lot, did the conga round the pizza oven,

played practical jokes, got merry on orange-coloured Campari cocktails. We diligently rolled wafer-thin slices of grilled courgette around little chunks of salty local cheese and stuffed endless arrays of fruit and vegetables. The Puglian way of life is not too short to stuff a mushroom you see, or a courgette, or an aubergine, or a tomato...

But it was the sexy way Tonino (the local chef and restaurant owner who worked alongside Susanna) in one fluid movement smashed the garlic with the flat of his knife, then chopped it, the tip of the knife never leaving the chopping board, that made us breathe a little faster; and the tips for "teeps" as they became known that we picked up from Tonino, Susanna and the other guests.

Susanna is a rather dramatic 34-year-old Italian of, I think, grand parentage but who seems to have spent much of her childhood in the kitchen.

en. A journalist, she found backing in London for a scheme that would blend her passion for cooking with a yearning to explain to the world the many blessings of the Italian lifestyle. Six years ago after she opened her first cookery school in Umbria, she opened another in Puglia. This one is a very different kind of school — more rustic, very informal, more a holiday than a cookery course. You are invited to purchase Susanna's excellent book and a very reasonable five-litre can of olive oil at the end of the week.

Our day went like this: after breakfast we watched Susanna and Tonino cook lunch, with occasional help from us. After lunch we slept; then we bundled into mini-vans to visit places of local interest, and finally returned to watch Tonino cook our supper.

The best trip was a day out in the old city of Lecce, to see the renowned food market, the rococo cathedral and to picnic in a city park. The local dog-walkers are used to seeing these crazy English people every Wednesday laying out a table with *frittata*, rice salad, wine, crusty bread, and grapes bought in the market. I think we sang in the coach going home. The Swedes have a bouncy and peculiar road song about sitting in the back of cars and hoping not to crash.

"Home" was a 15th-century castle, La Spagnola, crumbling and beautiful and highly recommended in a book on bed and breakfast in Italy, its chapels and storerooms now converted into ensuite rather minimalist bedrooms (with rather minimalist plumbing). You remember the castle in the last scene of the last *Godfather* film where he falls off his chair, dead? Well, La Spagnola was a bit like that, very filmic.

You want to know about the boys behaving badly? Well, the first night Simon, Mark, Neil and Chris played bar football until dawn and drank anything they could find in the terrace bar — a heady combination of Coke, Campari, beer, wine, peach nectar, strange brandies — with a few hangers-on and chef Tonino. At 5am Tonino, by all accounts, suddenly got up, donned his

chef's whites, laid a perfect table and made them all spaghetti in truffle oil with chilli. Just like that. They came into class the next day clutching beads, herb teas, jugs of water and blue chins. And then did it again the next night. Their women were, of course, very tolerant, smiling sweetly between gritted teeth as they jabbed their rolled courgettes with cocktail sticks.



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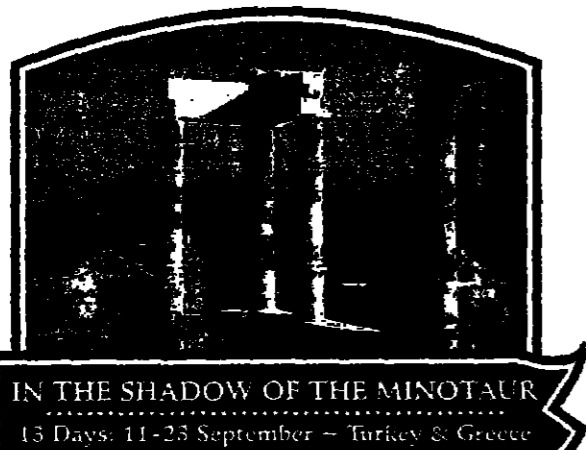
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Crusader town of Rhodes and Temple of Athena. DAY 11: Carpathos. DAY 12: Aghios Nikolaos. Minoan remains at Gournia, Kritsa's painted churches. DAY 13: Heraklion, Minoan palace of Knossos. Return flight.

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WEEKEND • SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22 1997

Switzerland: Shaken but not stirred, the skiing village of Grindelwald once played host to James Bond

One more gluhwein before I hit the slopes



For a weekend skiing with a touch of class you cannot beat the Swiss mountain village resort of Grindelwald. Tucked between the feet of the Eiger, Jungfrau and Wetterhorn mountains, Grindelwald and the surrounding area have more than 270km of ski runs. These include the slopes of the Jungfrau, Mount First, Männlichen and, 30 minutes' drive away, the mighty Schilthorn. It also offers skiers of all levels plenty to choose from — not to mention stunning views, fine hotels and enjoyable après-ski.

Last year saw the start of the Swiss airline Air Engiadina's flights from London's City Airport to Bern. This allows you to depart from Docklands in London at 8.05am and arrive in Bern in under two hours. Another hour's drive to the hotel in Grindelwald, and you can be on the slopes by just after 1pm.

The resort has a selection of places to stay but if you want to spoil yourself the five-star Grand Hotel Regina is a must. Situated across the street from the Jungfrau railway station, the starting point for many spectacular excursions through the region, the hotel enjoys a central position in the village. It also has a colourful history (former guests include the Beatles, Margaret Thatcher and a "canaveral" of NASA astronauts) and a splendid restaurant — I recommend the bouillabaisse.

The people of Grindelwald pride themselves on the region's outstanding natural beauty and a key to this clean, pollution-free environment is the Jungfrau railway, a cog railway that runs the 12km (straight through the Eiger and Mönch mountains) to the Jungfraujoch, Europe's highest railway station at about 11,333ft above sea level. Here you will find the Sphinx meteorological station, ice Palace and restaurant as well as views across the awesome Aletsch glacier. The glacier looks pristine and deceptively inviting but temperatures can drop to -20C.

Two stops below the Jungfrau summit, 40 minutes above Grindelwald, is Kleine Scheidegg, the centre for all ski activity on the Jungfrau. Based at the foot of the notorious Eiger, Kleine Scheidegg is the hub for more than 98km of ski runs and a colourful encampment for many a glühwein bar. This is vital to warm the cockles and to supply that essential courage only the Dutch know so well.

A 30-minute drive from Grindelwald and then 30 minutes again in a four-stop cable-car and you arrive at the Schilthorn summit. At 9,900ft above sea level is the restaurant made famous for its role



Kleine Scheidegg, high above Grindelwald, is based at the foot of the Eiger and is the centre for more than 98km of ski runs; it also accommodates many a cosy glühwein bar



Views from the Eiger

in the James Bond film *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. Taking lunch in the solar-powered, revolving restaurant, which moves through 360 degrees in one hour, affords majestic views over Mount Blanc, the Bernese Alps and the Black Forest on Germany's central plain. Naturally, I chose a vodka martini for my aperitif.

Shaken but not stirred, intrepid skiers can set forth on an excellent black run through a testing field of moguls that starts just outside the restaurant. After a mile or so the moguls disappear and merge into the gentler slopes of Birg, the next cable-car stop down from the Schilthorn, which provides calmer skiing.

The slopes on the Schilthorn, all 50km of them, open at 9.30am but beginner and intermediate skiers will find the skiing here a little more challenging than on the Jungfrau. The only drawback to the Schilthorn is the T-bar lift at the bottom of the Engetal run

beneath Birg. It is more demanding than the ski down and calls for better technique. As on the Jungfrau, ski-lifts close at 4.30pm.

The après-ski in Grindelwald includes the usual collection of shops, bars, restaurants and clubs. The Old Spotted Cat club (turn right out of the Grand Hotel Regina and walk 500 yards up the main street) opens early and closes late, providing skiers with the chance to dance away any remaining energy until the small hours.

One activity that must be attempted is the Bussalp sledge-run every Sunday evening. The organisers provide the sledges and coaches leave from Grindelwald's central square, next to the ice sculptures, between 7.30pm and 9pm. After a traditional and amply fortified fondue, the hardy travellers straddle their mounts and sledge the four miles back to Grindelwald.

It takes a good 45 minutes to get down, leaving plenty of time to absorb the views of drifting Alpine snow, cloud-busting spruces and village lights twinkling in the valley below. Or you can simply fall off your sledge every 100 yards in fits of uncontrollable laughter. But do take care that you do not collide with any velogemels. These are wooden bicycle-like devices that have ski-runners in place of wheels. They are a Swiss method of winter transport, unique to the area. Like a long-weekend's skiing in Grindelwald, they are great fun but gone in the twinkling of an eye.

PERRY CLEVELAND-PECK



Grindelwald: glorious

FACT FILE

■ The author was a guest of The Leading Hotels of the World. For reservations call 0800 181 123 (toll free). At the Grand Hotel Regina (0041 36 54 54 55) prices start from £197 per night for a double room without breakfast. An "Alpine Adventure" stay (minimum of two nights) costs £233 per night for a double room including breakfast, one evening meal and an excursion to Mount First.

■ Air Engiadina (0345 666777) flights from City Airport to Bern cost £189 weekday return, £209 at weekends.

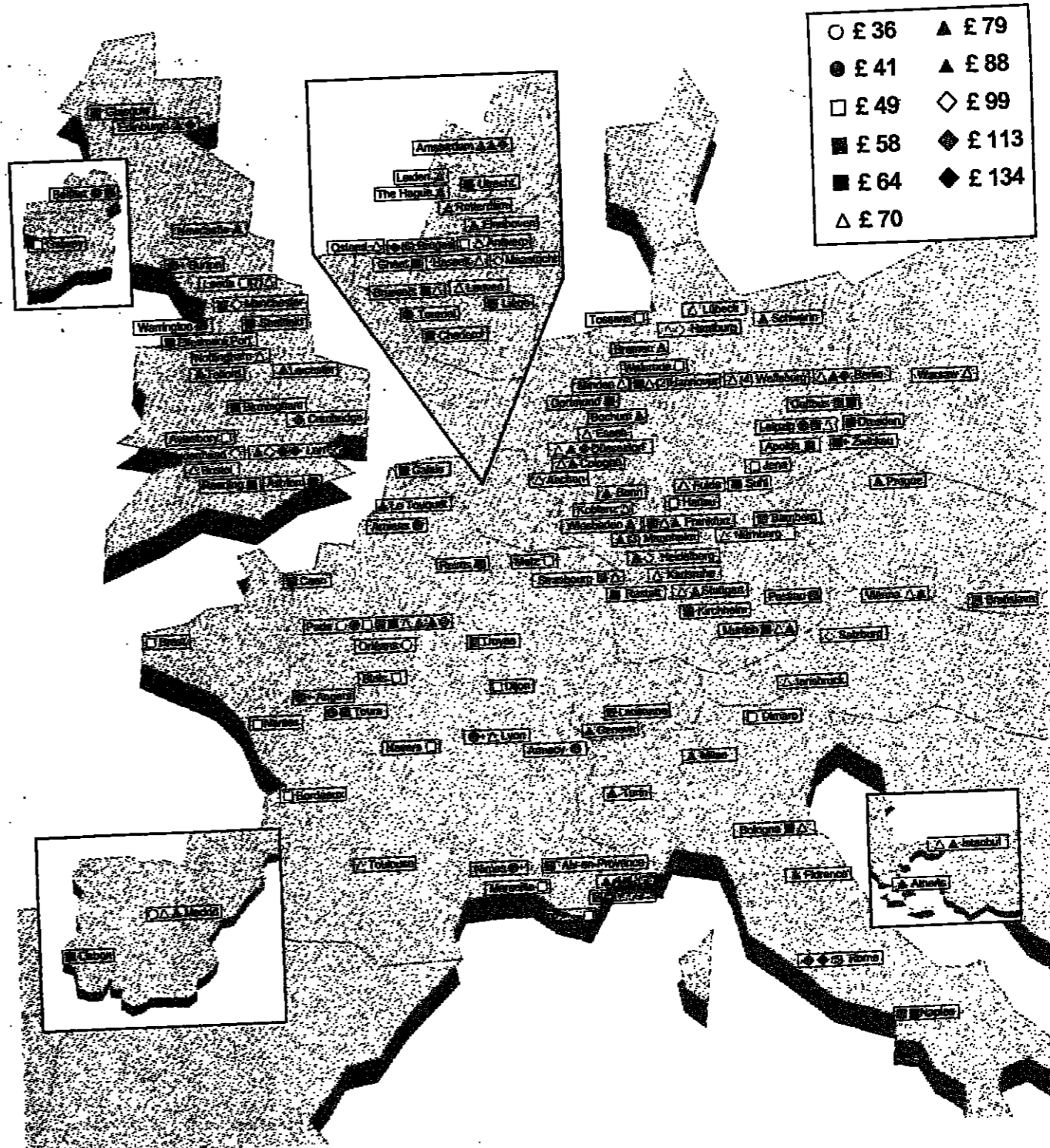
■ Ski passes for five days cost £102. Ski hire, arranged by the hotel, from £68 for five days.

■ Grindelwald Tourist Office (0041 36 54 12 12).

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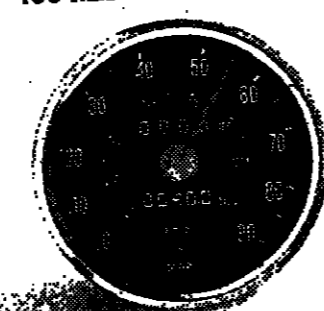
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Fantasies in Marrakesh

A CAMEL, a mini-maze, swinging beds and an olive press to make your own oil are just a few of the extras that come with CV Travel's (0171-589 0132) exotic offerings in Marrakesh, Morocco. The villa, the Verger de L'Etoile Filante in an oasis of palms just outside the city, is an eccentric 1,001 nights fantasy of nooks and crannies, salons and terraces, a yellow garden with lemon trees, grapefruit and yellow flowers, blue and white gardens and mosaic pool. Two cooks prepare Moroccan and international dishes, and staff will help guests cope with the meele of Marrakesh. The villa sleeps up to 16 and costs £5,250 per week.

Beside a 20-mile lake near Ouarzazate and part of a golf club development (a favourite game with the King), Kasbah du Lac is a villa well placed for trekking, riding in the Atlas Mountains and exploring the desert area of Zagora. It costs from £1,000 per week for ten people.

Among CV Travel's other new properties, Torre Trasita (pictured, right), perched above the Amalfi coast at Positano, is a circular 14th-century Saracen tower converted to three apartments each costing from £405 per week, plus fares.

Faster tracks

WORK on the first £17 billion phase of the TGV-Est high-speed railway line from Paris to Alsace will start early next year with the 270-kilometre section to Vandières, south of Metz, due for completion in 2004. This will reduce the present four-hour journey from Paris to Strasbourg to two hours 30 minutes. Reims to 45 minutes and Nancy and Metz to one hour 30 minutes. The TGV-Est will also bring journey times between Paris and Frankfurt down to three hours 40, and Munich to four hours 50 and Berlin to six hours 30.

Dubrovnik day

THE first British carrier to operate to Dubrovnik airport since 1991 is the charter airline Palmair (01202 299299). It will fly there from Bournemouth on March 5 for a special day trip costing £159 to include a guided tour of the city. Flight time is three hours.

I found it a heartening experience to walk the city's mellow walls recently to check on restoration work of damage suffered during the siege between October 1991 and May 1993 (on December 6 alone, 600 shells fell on the city); the shrapnel holes in the Stradun, one of the world's finest high streets, are now undetectable, with roofs, fountains and façades restored and many hotels up and running. Palmair will also offer week-long holidays in Dubrovnik in September from £399 half-board at the Hotel Excelsior.

Greek treks

MOUNTAIN biking in the Mani, river trekking, walking, wading, swimming and canyoning (abseiling past waterfalls) in the southern Pindos, and exploring lesser-known islands by rubber inflatable, are among the adventure holidays in off-the-beaten-track Greece offered by Sunvil Holidays (0181-568 4499). These are run in conjunction with Trekking Hellas, founded by Greek mountain guides ten years ago, the first Greek agency to specialise in adventure tourism.

A week-long Zodiac Adventure explores home waters of the legendary Odysseus around Ithaca, Meganissi and Kalamos, with three nights camping on more remote islands. The trip, including flights and half-board, costs £675 and can be combined with other Greek holidays.

Stay in touch

"CAN'T make Delhi", "Let's meet in Beijing", "Need more money" — a system of keeping in touch with family and friends travelling the world is offered by Travellers' Connections (0181-286 3065). Subscribers are allocated their own numbers and security codes giving access to their own mailbox to collect voice messages left by relatives and friends. Normal telephones can be used, and the cost of the mailbox is £15 for one month, up to £75 for a year.

Classic cars

AMONG the festivities to celebrate the 700th anniversary of Monty and the Grimsdell dynasty, classic cars will race through Monte Carlo on the Grand Prix circuit a week before the big race on May 11. Past winner Stirling Moss is to drive in the race for cars of 1954-1960 vintage, and other races will feature the cars that carried Graham Hill to five wins.



Torre Trasita, a 14th-century Saracen tower near Positano, now converted into three apartments

Spring trips

BARGAIN prices from March to the end of May from Kuoni's Limited Editions (01306 740500) include five nights B&B in Sri Lanka for £389 (the rainy season starts around the end of April); seven nights in Cancun, Mexico, for £449 and seven nights in Luxor, Egypt, from £299 B&B.

Horse work

HORSE-DRAWN caravan holidays for two people through Ireland's Kerry countryside cost from £265 per week per person including ferry crossing, with any

additional passengers going free. Food for the horse is extra, about £10 per beast.

A one-week Shannon River self-drive cruise for two costs from £235 per person, again with additional passengers going free. Fuel is extra. Both from Cresta Holidays (0990 561814).

Egyptian opera

VERDI'S *Aida* is to be performed opposite the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut in Luxor, Egypt, October 12-19. The price of tickets for the opera will be from £94-£188, except for the opening night when they cost £125-£188. Reservations from the Cairo Opera House (00

202 342 0601). For further information telephone the Egyptian Tourist Office in London (0171-493 5282).

Do it yourself

FORTY-EIGHT largely self-catering properties in England and Wales are offered in a special brochure from the YHA (01727 845047). Many are on the coast, others are located in the countryside or cities. A family of four can have a week's stay at Conwy in North Wales for a total of £231, while two nights in a hostel near St Paul's in London will cost £149, including breakfast. YHA membership is necessary.

Rough guides and smooth

The latest guidebooks offer advice on everything from caterpillars to yak milk

Guidebooks are fluttering down like autumn leaves in Vallombrosa. In fact, Vallombrosa (just outside Florence and praised by Milton, whom I have just quoted) comes into *Walking and Eating in Tuscany and Umbria*, an excellent practical guide to routes and local food by two energetic walkers, James Lasdun and Pia Davis (Penguin, £8.99).

The *Rough Guide* series has spread its wings recently, with new or revised books on *Cyprus* and *Vietnam* (£9.99 each), *Nepal*, *Hawaii*, *Peru* and *Guatemala* & *Belize* (all £10.99); *Kenya* and *Zimbabwe* & *Botswana* (both these with a wildlife guide in colour, at £11.99) and a fat volume on *India* at £14.99.

This series has always provided the smooth as well as the rough. It gives expert advice on cheap ways of travelling, but does not miss out on possibilities of greater comfort, and is thorough and accurate on history and art, assuming that all its readers want that. A good example is Greg Ward's account, in the new volume on Hawaii, of the recent "Polynesian Renaissance" of the canoe, with boats going again between the islands with the blessing of Maori elders.

Peru (£10.99) also appears, along with *Turkistan* (£10.99) and *Andalucía* and *Laos* (£9.99 each), in another good series of slightly earlier vintage, the *Footprint Handbooks*. These are sturdy hardbacks, generally more traditional in approach than the *Rough Guides* but crammed with reliable information. In *Andalucía*, Rowland Mead includes not only the Holy Week processions in Seville, but also the processions of poisonous-haired, caterpillars which sometimes cross the roads and tracks in spring, with advice on what to tell the chemist if you happen to touch one.

to-date information on the tombs and other archaeological sites that tourists go to Egypt to see, and an illustrated survey of the local gods and goddesses.

Lonely Planet also publishes *Language Survival Kits*, additions to which include a *Nepali Phrasebook*, *Ukrainian Phrasebook* and *Malay Phrasebook* (£3.99 each). You can ask how to buy yak's milk in Nepal, and learn to say "I am a postgraduate" in Ukraine. There is also a *Rough Guide Phrasebook of Vietnamese* (£3.50), which will enable you to order snails cooked with spices and banana. Travellers want to get the most out of their holidays these days.

This *Way Travel Guides* are short, pocket-size books in, as they say, "sunny yellow" covers. There is a new one on *Sardinia*, cheap and cheerful at £2.99. The travel publisher Brandt has brought out a new edition of *Australia and New Zealand* by Rail by Colin Taylor (£10.95). This is a comprehensive account of the rail network, with suggested itineraries through, for example, the Queensland rainforests or past the canyons of the Blue Mountains. It also lists all the special cheap passes, such as the Westrail Premier Discovery Pass (which is not valid, we are carefully informed, for the special Wildflower coach tours).

Such amenities were unknown to the users of the books described in Alan Sillitoe's *Leading The Blind: A Century of Guidebook Travel, 1815-1911* (Penguin, £9). From Beedeker, Murray and other guidebooks, Sillitoe has put together a delightful picture of travel in those years, with such contemporary tips as that in small Swiss hotels: "Wine is often a source of much vexation. The ordinary table wines are sometimes so bad that the traveller is compelled to drink those of a more expensive class, which indeed is the very aim and object of the landlord." This observation may still be true today.

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Merry men in tights

For one who has not drawn a breath, never mind a longbow, in 700 years, Robin Hood has a bigger following now than when there was just himself, his merry men and Maid Marian.

In our hero's day, Sherwood Forest would have been on the doorstep of our central Nottingham hotel. But the centuries have taken their toll on the greenwood, and one of the best places to see it now is at the visitor centre near the village of Edwinstowe, about ten miles north of the city.

Sherwood, the legendary home of Robin Hood, was once one of England's great royal hunting grounds and the visitor centre is in the last remaining part of the old forest. An exhibition, *The Legend of Robin Hood and Merry Sherwood*, sets the scene and a nature centre shows why the forest is now a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

A small charge for the exhibition includes prize draw questionnaires to amuse the children on the 20-minute waymarked trail to the Major Oak, a majestic medieval specimen reputed to be Robin's favourite hiding place. It is now propped up to support its overhanging branches and fenced off to protect its roots from visitors' feet.

The centre has an open-air woodland theatre with an ever-changing programme. On the day we visited, Bill Brookman, a man in tights, was presenting *Robin Hood Meets the Cosmos*, a frenetic interpretation of the outlaw tale placing the legend in the context of life, the universe and just about everything. The children loved him. The grown-ups eventually loved him, too, once they cast off their inhibitions and threw themselves into their impromptu starring roles.

At St Mary's church in Edwinstowe, Robin is said to have wed Marian. A few miles to the south, in the hillside cemetery of Blythwood parish church, is the gravestone of Will Scarlett, while at Papplewick church stands the ancient yew from which Robin cut his first bow and Allen-a-Dale got his true love.

The city of Nottingham itself has much to offer the visitor — much more, in fact, than can be crammed into the longest of long weekends. As many of the attractions are within a few minutes' walk of the city centre, it is advisable, especially for families with young children, to select a central location.

We found the Royal Moat House ideally situated and comfortable, with four restaurants. Nottingham City Council's explorer pass allows



Major Oak, a majestic medieval tree that was reputed to be Robin Hood's favourite hiding place

discounted admission to five of the city's most popular attractions. Staying with the outlaw trail, we visited *The Tales of Robin Hood* on Maid Marian Way. Here, high-tech transporter cars take one back 700 years to relive the legend in sight, sound and smell.

Afterwards, you can try your hand at archery as you "shoot the sheriff", or watch a short film that tries to unravel Robin's real identity.

Just around the corner, at the top of Friar Lane, stand the medieval gates to Nottingham Castle, which is not really a castle at all but a fine 17th-century ducal mansion built

on the site of the original Norman fortress and commanding spectacular views. The building now houses one of the finest museums and art galleries in the East Midlands. Tours are recommended of Mortimer's Hole, a steep cave through the sandstone rock beneath the museum.

The entrance to the most fascinating glimpse of the city's past is to be found in the modern bustle of the Broad Marsh shopping centre, whose bright lights give way in the cool gloom of the Caves of Nottingham beneath its foundations.

This warren of man-made caves, last used as a wartime air-raid

shelter, were saved by local voluntary groups when the shopping centre was built. The caves were widely used as pub cellars, the constant temperature (14°C) being ideal for storing barrels of beer. The pillar caves are the most impressive, dating from 1250 and containing the remains of Britain's only underground tannery.

Nearby, in a restored chapel in the historic Lace Market area, is the Lace Hall. Audiovisual presentations and demonstrations of lace-making on a 100-year-old working machine bring to life the story of lace and Nottingham's role in the textile revolution.

In the neighbouring former 19th-century courthouse and county gaol is "Condemned! ... at the Gallies of Justice", a grim flog 'em and hang 'em tour likely to satisfy the most ardent devotee of crime and punishment, from a reenactment of a true 19th-century show trial down to the sandstone cave cells known as "the pits".

It was the grown-ups who shuddered the most at the menacing jailer, not the children, who thoroughly enjoyed clambering up the steps to the gallows in the claustrophobic exercise yard. Lying under the flagstones were those who, in this yard, had seen their last glimpse of the sky. And Robin Hood thought he had a hard time with the Sheriff of Nottingham.

PATRICK HANLON



Keen young followers of Robin Hood and his group of outlaws seek inspiration from his statue

NOTTINGHAM FACT FILE

■ The author was a guest of the Nottingham Royal Moat House, Wollaton Street, Nottingham NG1 5RH (01159 369988). Double en suite room from £120 per night; breakfast £9.95 per person. Weekend rate (two nights B&B to include Saturday): £47 per person; "Robin Hood" offer, subject to availability: £29.50 per person B&B.

■ How to get there: British Rail inquiries for Nottinghamshire: (0345 484950). East Midlands International Airport (01332 852552) is 14 miles away.

■ Other places of interest: Newstead Abbey, Newstead Abbey Park (01623 793557). Ancestral home of Lord Byron, containing his possessions, manuscripts and first editions in period rooms, 200 acres of parkland. The World of Robin Hood, Haughton, near Retford. Relive medieval history in sound and vision, medieval village, film sets from Robin Hood — Prince of Thieves. D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum, Eastwood (01773 763312). Furnished appropriately to the time of the Lawrence family's occupations; adjacent craft centre.

■ City of Nottingham: Tourism Section, Nottingham City Council, Castle Gate House, 24-30 Castle Gate, Nottingham NG1 7AT (01159 483500)

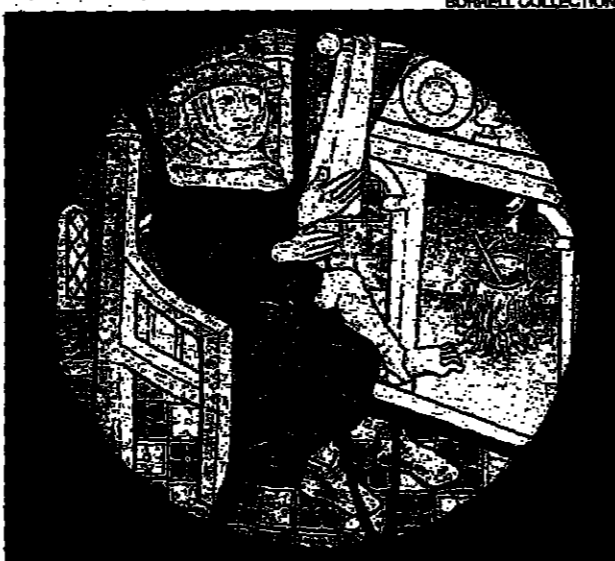
Zen and the art of Glasgow

Ten years ago Glasgow was all Gorbals and tenements in most people's minds, but since its stint as European City of Culture it has come to represent museums, music, galleries, good food and the style of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. "First time in Glasgow?" our first cabbie asked, as he took us from station to hotel. "You'll like it."

The next cabbie, who took us to the Ubiquitous Chip, one of 11 Glasgow restaurants in the *Good Food Guide*, was just as proud of his city. "Don't those buildings look magnificent, all cleaned up and floodlit? That's the University on your left, or I should say Glasgow University because we've got three ... that's Kelvingrove Park, which has got two art galleries ..."

I got happily lost in the Ubiquitous Chip's wine list, which includes three single-spaced pages of single-malt whiskies and what seemed like 1,000 wines. My Aberdeen Angus steak was sublime, and my partner's monkfish was huge. Cuisine and culture were obviously going to be the themes of this weekend's visit, but with almost 40 entries in the *Glasgow Galleries Guide*, two days would give us no more than a toe-dip.

The Burrell Collection was donated to the city by the shipowner Sir William Burrell (1861-1958), who began buying in his teens and was still at it when he was 96. He accumulated 8,000 objects, most of which are now on show in a stunning purpose-built building in Pollok Park in the south-west of the city. There are Persian carpets, Rodin sculp-



A stained-glass window from the Burrell collection

tures including *The Thinker*, prints by Rembrandt, paintings by Cézanne, Degas, Manet and Millet, some fine Egyptian heads and reliefs, and a display of stained glass that goes back to the 12th century. And, as with all Glasgow's museums, admission is free, as are guided tours. Other cities take note.

More free culture but not a free lunch at the Willow Tea Rooms designed by Mackintosh above Henderson's the Jewellers in Sauchiehall Street. Mirrored walls make the small room look larger, but Mackintosh's high-backed silver chairs also make it look crowded. And it is for much of the time, so be prepared to queue on the stairs while you await your tea and fancies.

The St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art opened in 1993 with claims to be the

only religious museum in the world. It looks at the way all faiths affect both art and daily life, from Salvador Dali to the Dalai Lama. Named after the city's patron saint, it stands in front of the cathedral and opposite the oldest house in Glasgow, the 1471 Provand's Lordship, also open to visitors.

Some of the work has been specially commissioned, such as a delightful statue of the Hindu elephant god Ganesha, made in Bangalore. The multi-denominational nature is not to everyone's taste, as a glance at the comments people are invited to leave indicates. One asks that Ganesha be moved away from the influence of nearby Christian exhibits, to which someone else scribbles: "But that's the whole point!" A visitor from Athens asks

where is the Orthodox faith, though most comments are of the "profound experience" variety. I found it just that.

Step through to the gallery devoted to religious life, and you are confronted by a horrific dancing skeleton, made for the Mexican Day of the dead. This gallery deals with the way different religions deal with our journey through life, from birth via courtship and marriage to death and the after-life. Stunning black and white photographs confront us with images of religious warfare, of Northern Ireland and the Holocaust.

Upstairs is a gallery devoted to religion in Scotland, and a large window looks down on Britain's only Japanese Zen garden. This blissfully peaceful scene has rippling patterns of stone which lead the eye to Glasgow Cathedral, largely built in the 13th and 14th centuries.

Alongside is the city's Necropolis, a hillside tumble of tombs and crosses. I should have explored more but the rain was drizzling and my cultural coffers were full for the day. It was time to get back to Scottish cuisine and a supper of salmon mousse and venison steaks at One Devonshire Gardens, yet another of Glasgow's culinary shrines.

But the last word goes to the cabbie who dropped us at the station: "People expect Glasgow to be a rough old place but I've yet to meet a visitor who hasn't been pleasantly surprised by what we've got to offer."

MIKE GERRARD
● The author was a guest of the Glasgow Tourist Board.

GLASGOW FACT FILE

■ Where to stay: Malmeson, 278 West George Street (0141-221 6400). Small and stylish. Double room £80 per night; suite £110. One Devonshire Gardens (0141-339 2001). Small and deluxe. Double room costs £165 midweek, £125 at weekends.

■ Where to eat: The Ubiquitous Chip, 12 Ashton Lane (0141-334 5007). Open daily. The Willow Rooms, 217 Sauchiehall Street (0141-332 0521).

■ What to visit: The Burrell Collection, 2060 Pollokshaws Road (0141-649 7151).

Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 11am-5pm. The St Mungo Museum, 2 Castle Street (0141-553 2557). Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 11am-5pm. Hunterian Art Gallery, University of Glasgow, 82 Hillhead Street (0141-330 5431). Open Mon-Sat 9.30am-5pm. Includes a reconstruction of Mackintosh's former home at 78 Southpark Avenue (closed at lunchtime). Also fine Whistler collection.

■ Glasgow Tourist Information Centre, 39 St Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2ER (0141-204 4480).

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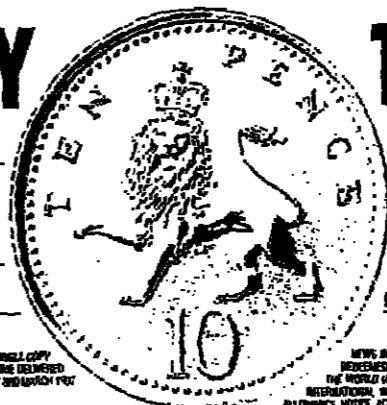
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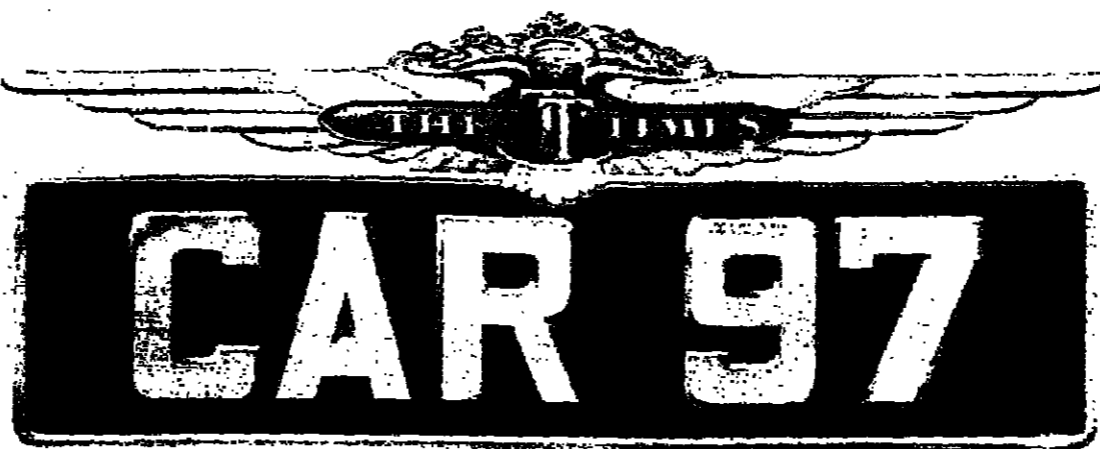
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How to get ahead on bikes, and the new Triumphs

Pages 3, 10



The hunt is on for our top company driver

Page 5



SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22 1997

Many drivers risk lives by failing to secure their pets, warns Simon Hacker in the run-up to Cruft's

Deadly danger of unrestrained dogs



Cages and harnesses are recommended by experts

As 20,000 dogs and their loving owners prepare to converge on Cruft's 1997 next month, some bad news: no matter how affectionate and even-tempered your canine friend, as a car passenger it can maim or kill both itself and you.

It's not Fido's fault. But an unsecured dog in the back of a car becomes an extreme danger in the event of an accident.

Colliding with a solid object when driving at the urban speed limit creates the same force of deceleration used to test safety belts in a crash simulator. But while the seatbelted driver may be abruptly restrained in a crash, an unsecured 50lb dog sitting in the back of the car will continue flying forwards.

Multiply the hapless dog's body weight by what accident researchers term a "pulse" of 20G, and a three-and-a-half-stone adult Springer Spaniel is transformed into an unguided missile propelled by a wallowing 1,000ft/lbs of kinetic energy.

Although the vast majority of Cruft's Show contenders will be nursed to Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre in the relative safety of harnesses, padded boxes and cages, the parcel-shelf poodle and lap-top Labrador are still common features of driving life. Two years into her job, trainee veterinary nurse Jess White from Gloucestershire has already seen her fair share of road-related pet injuries, but a crash in which her own whippet, Dudley, died has made her an avid spokeswoman for dog safety.

"I was driving in my Mini at about 60mph when another vehicle pulled out on me," she recalls. "Dudley, who was 12, was sitting on the back seat when we crashed. I suffered head injuries; he broke his neck. But he didn't die immediately and was in terrible pain. I wouldn't let the ambulance take him away until the vet had arrived. I learnt my lesson the hard way; you should always choose a car with rear belts and fit a proper dog harness to the belt."

'Letting pets on the parcel shelf is madness'

Mike Dickison, group leader for body engineering and safety at the Motor Industry Research Association's laboratories, says a hatchback or estate car with fold-down rear seats can be less likely to stop loose objects flying about in an impact, because the seats buckle under pressure. But the good news is that the introduction of centre three-point belts in place of lap belts has resulted in greater strength.

"The seats have been reinforced for the fifth belt and are less likely to collapse under the same strain. So if your dog is behind the seat, it will stand a better chance," says Dickison.

The magazine, *Dogs Today*, is campaigning to make dog safety a bigger issue among carmakers. "Manufacturers might be good at designing cup holders but they tend to develop a blind spot for four-legged passengers," explains editor Beverley Cuddy.

"Volvo is making extraordinary efforts. For the 850 saloon, there's a cage area which allows you to fold a seat down and keep your dog in the boot, but the dog can still see you, so everyone's happy. Apart from Volvo though, no one else seems to be bothered."

Given that a quarter of UK households have dogs, carmakers need to wake up, says Cuddy. "They're quick to use dogs to beautify their brochures, but that's about as far as it goes. We tell our readers to take their dogs with them when they go for a test drive."

The RSPCA recommends harnesses, particularly for small dogs. Spokeswoman Justine Pannett says, "It's important that the restraint is fitted to the dog's body and not a collar. For bigger dogs, we recommend a guard to stop the animal from falling forwards."



Without a modern, strongly mounted harness, a dog like Vesper would become an unguided missile in a collision

The RAC, however, has doubts about conventional dog guards. Safety spokesman Kevin Delaney feels a guard might actually increase injury risks. "A guard might prevent Fido from hopping into the front, but it's pretty useless for restraining a big dog in a crash. If it comes free, you have the added problem of the guard, as well as your dog, heading your way. The last thing you want immediately after a collision is for both dog and guard to rearrange themselves around the back of your head."

But that doesn't mean don't restrain your dog. "It's utter madness to let small dogs stand or sit on the parcel shelf," Delaney says. "When you brake sharply, the dog is likely to end up embedded under the front seat. In a head-on — and if it doesn't take out half of your skull on the way — it will hit the windscreen. And any dog left to wander loose in the back of any car is lethal baggage."

Be it to a show or just for walks, if you're planning to take your dog on a journey, the RAC advises that you ensure that your dog is confined to an area big enough to enable it to lie down, but small enough to prevent it from roaming about. If possible, place padded material between the seat-back and the dog, so that if the dog moves forwards suddenly in an accident or when braking hard, any impact is cushioned.

The Department of Transport says it has not researched restraints for dogs, but points to the Highway Code for guidance.

"Section 213 of the code stresses the need to keep animals under control and to make sure they are not a distraction to the driver, so an unrestrained dog could be judged by police as driving without due care and attention," says a spokesman.

Car insurers have no guidelines or stipulations for dog owners, and pet insurers such as Hill House Hammond do not insist upon cages or harnesses being fitted.

Some pet-product specialists, however, suggest more dogs are killed in the panic following a crash than during the crash itself. Geoff Caldwell, managing director of Barjo Kennel Systems, believes an unrestrained dog will jump through a broken window and often into the path of other traffic. Barjo designs wire mesh cages which are custom made to fit most models of estate car. A standard cage sells for £135.

"The key is to protect your dog from injury, protect you from your dog and protect anyone attempting to rescue you from a distressed and potentially dangerous animal," says Caldwell.

Cruft's Show starts on March 6 at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.



Beatty's Cocker Spaniels are happy to ride in cages

How to quell a Boxer rebellion

TRISHA BENTLEY, whose Cocker Spaniel, Albert, was overall winner at Cruft's in 1996, believes different dogs require different restraints. Albert and her nine other Cocker Spaniels are happy to ride in wire cages in the back of her Ford Escort. But Vesper, a prize Boxer bitch, just won't entertain being stashed at the back of the car.

Says Trisha: "Vesper panics and she has to be closer to me, so she sits on the back seat and wears a restraining Hi-Craft harness which attaches to the safety belt."

"It is important that dog owners think before they set out on a journey and that they keep the wellbeing of their dogs in mind. A dog is a member of the family."



Harness-supporter Jess White lost Dudley, above, in a crash

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Taxing road-use is a money-raising stunt that won't make more motorists travel to the office by rail — drivers will just avoid the motorways instead

Road tolls are a ding-dong idea

My part of the country is now regarded as being in the M4 corridor, a term lovingly used by estate agents to convince people that an area is within daily commuting distance of London. And indeed there are plenty of people in my area who do commute to London every day; you can identify them by the bags under their eyes.

An off-peak standard-class return ticket from Chippenham, my nearest main-line station, to Paddington now costs £31.50. The same return journey by car is about 200 miles and in an average car will use, at most, six gallons of fuel. In Chippenham, unleaded petrol costs about £2.80 a gallon, therefore the fuel cost of the journey is £17.16.

The last time the Government

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



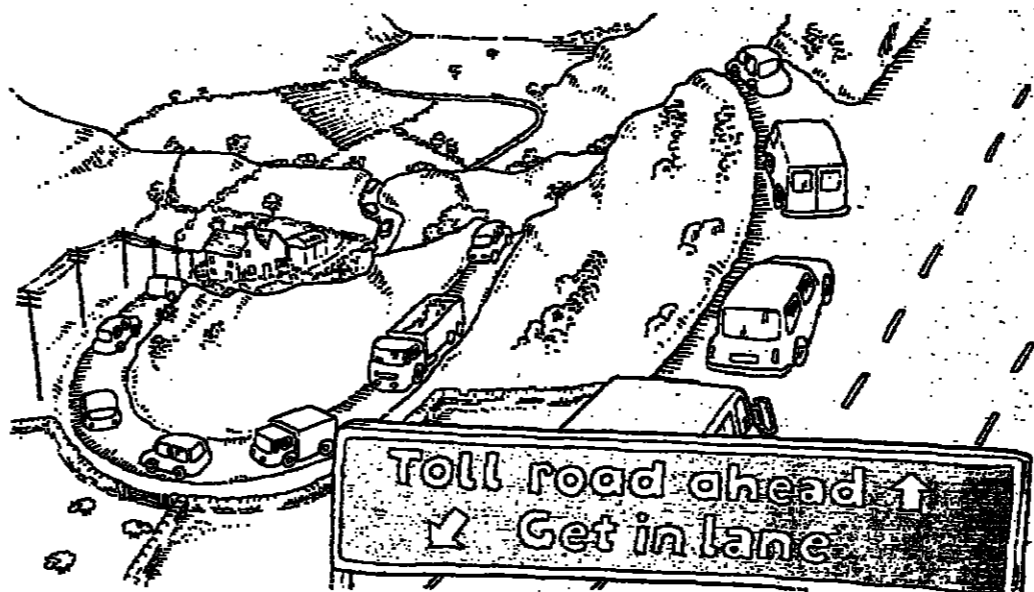
Peter Barnard

costed road pricing, it reckoned that cars would pay 1.5p per mile for motorway journeys. Thus the aforementioned round-trip would set us back £3 in tolls at the very most. Add that to the fuel cost and we have a grand total of £20.16. So, even using the cheapest return rail

fare as a comparison, the journey is more than £11 cheaper by road than it is by rail.

This week *The Times* reported that the Government is pressing ahead with trials of a "ray-gun" device to collect road tolls. The nominal purpose of tolls is to make motorists pay for the cost of road improvements, even though we already pay the Treasury far more than we get back in road spending. But the secondary purpose of tolls is to make motorway more expensive and thus force us to use the railways.

Before you rush for the word processor or the writing paper, I know that motorists are living in dreamland if they think the only cost of travelling by car is the fuel. Surveys have shown that the real, overall cost of motoring is quite high but there is a central fallacy in



those figures: they imply that if we went to work by rail, we would not own a car at all.

Of course we would. It would do less mileage if we travelled by rail to work, suggesting a higher residual value and fewer repairs, but then we would be likely to keep the car longer. So by the time we came to trade it in, the car would

be worth no more than if we were swapping a newer one with the same mileage.

Railway advocates also suffer convenient amnesia about the fact that just as car journeys cost more than the petrol, rail journeys cost more than the ticket. Before the railways were privatised, taxpayers were subsidising them to the

tune of £1 billion a year. Now, the subsidy has doubled to £2 billion a year. We are paying twice as much not to own the railways as we paid to own them, though the subsidy is supposed to reduce and eventually disappear over the next decade.

So will road pricing get drivers off the motorways? Oh yes, definitely. The trouble is that road

pricing will not get drivers off the motorways and on to the trains, but off the motorways and on to the minor roads. If you doubt that, consider the fact that every time the toll on the older of the Severn bridges is raised, more transport firms tell their drivers to take the route through Gloucestershire that avoids the bridge.

Transport firms have already warned that road pricing (the toll would be much higher for lorries than cars) will increase the cost of goods, therefore another hidden cost is revealed: even people who do not use cars would end up paying for roads via the increased price of groceries.

No wonder that in last week's Autoglass/Car 97 poll, only 16 per cent thought road tolls were the answer to congestion. The majority are no doubt also worried that once tolls arrive, their cost would inexorably rise. That would not make rail more competitive, because rail fares also rise.

Road tolls are taxation by another name, a money-raising stunt with no impact on congestion or pollution. Tolls are a wheeze for the Treasury and the people who make the technology. For ordinary motorists they are simply a cost without a benefit.

Greening our traffic

Magic mix could clean up diesel

Water, plus a secret agent, might be the answer, says Stuart Birch

Tests that could revolutionise the diesel car industry are underway in a laboratory at the high-security Millbrook automotive development centre and proving ground. A new fuel which should be no more expensive than ordinary diesel could make smoky exhausts a thing of the past.

And the wonder ingredient that makes it all possible is water — working with a secret agent. Concern about possible health risks from diesel smoke and particulates — soot — blown from exhaust pipes has grown recently. But now a French-Chilean inventor, Charles Miriel, has set up a British-registered company to develop and market an emulsifying agent, codenamed HEM 100, which may bring ultra-clean emissions.

Miriel is trying to prove wrong the old saying that oil and water do not mix. The work at Millbrook will be completed in late March and if the figures add up, diesel fuel could gain a green halo.

News of the potential breakthrough is revealed in this month's specialist magazine, *Diesel Car & Jet*. "If Miriel's claims are proved accurate it will mean that he has come up with a cheap, organic, easily manufactured agent that performs the difficult trick of creating a permanent bond between diesel fuel and water. This could be the key to a new world of cleaner, more efficient car engines," says editor John Kerswill.

"It sounds almost too good to be true and only tests and time will prove whether it is. But it looks very hopeful at present."

Miriel's work could lead to a major battle between diesel and petrol power and may reverse the recent shrinking market for diesel cars in the UK — down from a peak of 23 per cent to 18 per cent.

Kerswill says the new fuel has been researched and developed by Miriel over the past 15 years, and is a "simple" modification of normal car diesel fuel. It could be used in any car diesel engine, be it old or new.

Henry Coelho, a retail design consultant is a director of Miriel's Eurofuel company. "Using water in diesel fuel is not new. Ship engines use it and some large truck engines have water injection. But the problem has been developing a fuel suitable for small engines and one which will cope with temperature changes. Early tests have seen temperatures as low as minus 17C and up to plus 45C without showing signs of deterioration," says Coelho.

He says it cuts particulates by at least 80 per cent, and oxides of nitrogen, hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide are all reduced by at least 30-40 per cent. These are very significant claims as governments bring in ever-tighter emissions legislation which pose major, and very expensive, problems for diesel car-engine makers.

The secret process involves diesel fuel and water being emulsified by the HEM 100 agent, which bonds water and hydrocarbon molecules to produce a milky looking liquid. The water lowers combustion temperature and reduces the formation of oxides of nitrogen. The water also results in smaller fuel droplets in the combustion chamber to permit far more efficient burning. It overcomes the problem of unburnt fuel which causes smoke and particulates.

'It may revive the market for diesel cars'

Coelho says when the water and diesel fuel emulsion enters the combustion chamber, the water flashes to superheated steam, atomising the fuel into minute droplets which can be totally burnt. "It may all sound very simple but it is a highly complex piece of chemistry. We believe HEM 100 could be either added to diesel fuel at the refinery or even at a filling station."

The cost of a gallon of emulsified fuel should be comparable to ordinary diesel, he says. "If a power unit was designed specifically for the new fuel the advantages would be greater. An added benefit is that the agent could be used for oil-spill dispersal."

SPECIAL PREVIEW: TWO NEW CARS UNVEILED THIS WEEK



SAAB 9-5

Aircraft styling gives the Saab a tapered nose and a "cockpit" interior while retaining the curved windscreen

FIRST photographs of a top-of-the-range saloon, the Saab 9-5 which will be powered by a new generation of ultra-clean and economical turbocharged Ecopower engines, were released by the Swedish company this week, writes Alan Copps.

The front of the four-door 9-5 bears a strong resemblance to current models, keeping the maker's traditional wedge-shaped styling and curved windscreen. The design also features striking rear pillars which are said to give it more space in the back seats. The fascia is inspired by the company's aircraft experience and curves around the driver, giving the feel of a cockpit.

All engines in the range will be turbocharged, offering safe use of power for overtaking and Saab engineers promise it will be their best model yet in terms of roadholding and handling.

The car will be unveiled in Sweden in June and go on show at the Frankfurt motor show in September. Sales in Britain should start the following month and the new car is expected to add to the company's strong performance here.

Unveiling the 9-5, Robert Hendry, Saab's chief executive, confirmed that Britain was the company's outstanding market last year with record sales of 14,900 cars.

SAAB 9-5

Body style: four-door saloon.

Engines: choice of turbocharged 2-litre or 2.3-litre four-cylinder, or V6 3-litre featuring a unique asymmetric turbocharger driven by exhaust from one bank of cylinders only.

Interior: will include as standard Saab's interactive head restraints designed to reduce whiplash injuries. Price: to be announced.

That means that one in ten executive cars sold here was a Saab. The new car will be a strong competitor for the BMW 5-Series, Audi A-6, Mercedes E-class and Volvo S70. Production of the ageing 9000CD will cease when the

new car is introduced but the 9000CS model, renowned for its outstanding safety performance, will continue.

A special fiftieth anniversary model of the 9000CS accounted for a quarter of Saab sales last year.



All-new A6 bears a strong family resemblance to the A4, which has been Audi's standard-bearer over the past year

AUDI A6

Body style: four-door saloon.

Engines: four-cylinder, 20-valve, turbocharged 1.8-litre giving 150bhp; six-cylinder 2.8-litre giving 193bhp and 2.4-litre V6 giving 165bhp; 1.9-litre TDI direct injection diesel will be added to range shortly after launch.

Interior: will include electronic climate control and remote central locking as standard. Price: to be announced.

ANOTHER BIG contender in the executive car market was unveiled this week when Audi released the first photographs of its all-new A6. It will go on sale in Britain in May and the company is expecting to sell 4,000 of this model in its first full year, writes Alan Copps.

In the first place, the car will offer a choice of four-cylinder, six-cylinder and V6 engines and a direct-injection diesel will be added to the range later. The 2.4-litre V6 is a new design and will deliver 165bhp. Models with the 2.8-litre six-cylinder engine come in both front-wheel drive and the highly rated four-wheel-drive quattro guise.

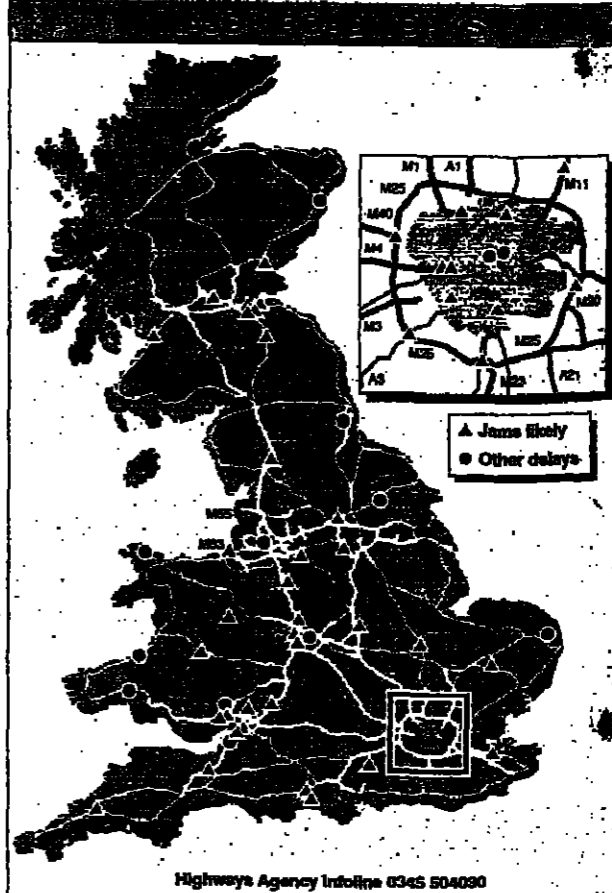
Styling of the car bears a strong family resemblance to the A4 which has been Audi's major standard-bearer over the past year. The company promises a high specification level with all models featuring lightweight alloy wheels, remote central locking and air-conditioning as standard.

Audi, part of the Volkswagen empire, was another company which met with sales success in Britain last year, with a 19 per cent increase to 30,327 vehicles sold, giving it a 1.5 per cent share of the market overall. The firm's smaller A3 model is expected to make a bigger impact in the British market this year although at present it is experiencing supply problems.

Audi's reputation was enhanced by victory last year in the fiercely competitive British Touring Car Championship. It won the constructor's trophy and German driver Frank Biela won the championship outright in his A4 quattro, despite the handicap of an increased weight penalty to compensate for the roadholding advantage offered by the four-wheel-drive. Its racing success was repeated worldwide with touring car championships in Germany, South Africa, Italy, Belgium, Spain and Australia being added to that in Britain.

- LONDON
M4 Junctions 1-2 Chiswick area: major roadworks, also on the elevated section and the entry and exit slips. Closures on A4 in both directions.
A306 Hammersmith Bridge closed both ways.
A8 Kingston: northbound lane closed between Sharnon Corner and Coombe Lane Junction.
M1 Junction 2 Hendon: major roadworks with no access to or from A1.
A408 Upper Edmonton: roadworks over the Lea Valley Viaduct.
A3212 Westminster Bridge closed overnight and weekends.
A232 Wallington: roadworks and width restrictions.
- SOUTH EAST
M40 Junctions 1a-2: roadworks with contraflow.
M11 Junctions 8-4: lanes closed.
A31 Ringwood: roadworks with contraflow.
A8 Epsom: lane closure off-peak.
M25 Junction 2: contraflow southbound lane closures.
M25 Junctions 6-10: restrictions and lane closures.
A3 near Guildford: works at Stag Hill.
- SOUTH WEST
M5 Junctions 18-19: contraflow.
A389 Bodmin: roadworks.
A48 Hill Street, Lydney: temporary lights.
A35 Christchurch Bypass: lane closure.
M5 Junction 13: roadworks with only one lane open at the junction with the A419.
M5 Junctions 26-27: lane closed in both directions.
M5 Junctions 23-22: lane closed.
- MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA
A1 Alconbury: one lane northbound.
A6 near M1 Junction 24: roadworks and contraflow in both directions.
A1064 Ayle Way Bridge: works.
A5 near M6 Junction 12: closed both ways.
A500 Stoke area: contraflow with one lane each way.
A14 between Newmarket and Bury St Edmunds: contraflow.
A41 Wolverhampton: temporary traffic lights on Blisdon Road.
A34 Birmingham: major roadworks on Stratford Road.
M6 Junction 2: major roadworks closing the southbound entry and northbound exit slip roads.
- NORTH
M6 Junctions 37-38: roadworks with a contraflow.

- A1M Junction 63: roadworks with 50mph limit at Junction 63 (Chester-le-Street, A167).
A6 Hazel Grove: water main work with one lane northbound in places between Mill Lane and Stopping Hill.
M6 Junctions 25-27: works with a 50mph speed limit and narrow lanes.
M53 Junction 2: works, with only one lane each way on the Moreton Spur.
M1 Junctions 34-35: contraflow down to two lanes in both directions.
M1 Junction 47: roadworks with lane closures and speed restrictions. Expect delays on the M1, M621 and Dewsbury Road.
- SCOTLAND
A98 Bridge of Don: roadworks affecting the traffic in both directions.
M8 Junction 2: lane closures on the roundabout at Junction 2 (Newbridge Spur, M9). Regular delays on all approaches.
A8 Edinburgh: lane closure off-peak.
A701 Edinburgh: contraflow between Old Bursheid Road and Jarefield off-peak.
A92 Tay Road Bridge: maintenance work at the bridge and lane closures Southbound.
M80 Junction 5: contraflow.
A710 Strathall Road, Midlothian: contraflow between Captains Road and the A720 City by-pass.
A7 Hares and Tower Street, maintenance work will cause slight delays.
A77 Symington: southbound lane closure for roadworks, just north of the Bogend Toll.
- WALES
A482 Upper Aberaeron Bridge on South Road is closed for reconstruction work. Diversions via Panteg Road and the A487, where there are also temporary traffic lights. Expect long rush hour delays.
A48 Carmarthen: temporary traffic lights and lane restrictions on Pansam roundabout.
A5025 City Dulas: one-way system over temporary bridge with width and weight limits.
A48 between Langstone and Penhow: temporary traffic lights.
A44 between Llangurig and Eisteddfod Gŵyl: temporary lights.
A488 Pont Sychod, Cynffynydd: temporary traffic lights, also affecting the A483.
A472 Pontypool: contraflow between Pontypool and the Heron Roundabout.



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AUTOFAX by Les Evans and David Long

PURVIS DEBARRAS HAS SOFT LINES AND SOFT HANDLING, BUT THE JAGUAR XJS IS THE COMPANY'S BEST-SELLING SPORTS CAR...

AN ESTIMATED 30% OF NEW CARS IN EUROPE ARE SOLD WITH AIR CONDITIONING

THE FIGHTER JET IN THE SAAB TV ADVERTISEMENT USES AN ENGINE MADE BY VOLVO...

THE PORSCHE BOATER MUSTERS NEARLY 160bhp PER TON, A CHALLENGER IS TAKEN ONLY 20...

New launch: Kevin Eason on the radical hatchback coupé designed in a flash to outrun the opposition

Powerful Puma — Ford's 135-day wonder

Ford really has torn up the rule book: out goes bland Euro-styling and in comes yet another radical shape that promises to shake up the competition at the cheapest end of the market.

The company this week unveiled the Puma, a coupé based on the chassis and running gear of a Fiesta. However, the coupé gets a new 1.7-litre Zetec SE power plant with 123 brake horse power, which means this little hatchback should have enough puff to outrun the competition from Vauxhall and Renault.

What is heartening though is that Ford has not been diverted from its mission to produce some radical new shapes to stick on our high streets. Like the Ka, which the company used to redefine the styling of superminis, the Puma will at least catch the eye, from its big bug-eyed headlamps right to the swept-up tail.

Vauxhall created the new category of mini-coupé with its Tigra, while Renault muscled into the market with a two-door version of the Megane. Ford has traditionally answered with a derivative Fiesta in XR2 or 1.4Si form, but now comes a model specifically targeted at buyers who want a sporty two-door without breaking the bank.

Prices will be announced closer to launch later in the year, but should be pitched at around £15,000 to remain within a pound coin's throw of the Tigra and Megane.

For the money, the car will be quite highly specified and feature

FORD PUMA

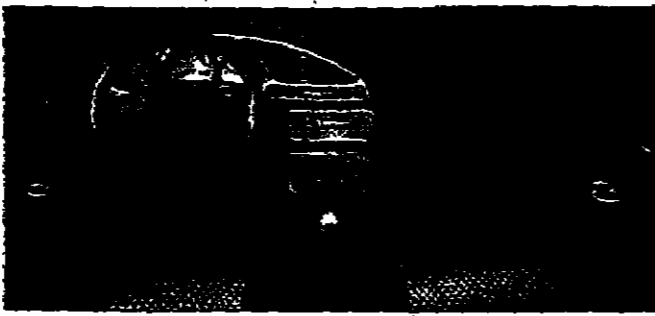
Engine: 1.7-litre, 16-valve Zetec SE, delivering 123bhp at 6,300rpm through five-speed transmission to front wheels.

Performance: 0 to 60mph in 8.8 seconds, top speed 126mph.

Fuel consumption: 38.2mpg on European average cycle.

Equipment: Anti-lock brakes, power steering, four diagonal seat belts, large-control stereo.

Price: around £15,000.



Puma dash is clean with white dials, the stereo easy to use

some of the interior cues learned from the Ka experience, so the dash is clean with white dials, the stereo a simple-to-use big-button format model, the seats sculpted and the boot big, though difficult to enter because the lip sits high over the fat rear bumper and is squashed between the three-light rear lamp clusters.

Ford's engineers are said to have worked on the driving experience to make it more pleasurable than the

current line-up, planting big 15-inch wheels onto low-profile tyres at the end of a wider track than the Fiesta, stiffening up the chassis and suspension and making the steering more responsive. Anti-lock brakes are standard.

The 1.7-litre Zetec engine is new to the Puma and will deliver peak torque from as low as 1,500rpm, managed through a close-ratio gearbox — topped off with a nifty aluminium knob — which prom-

ises that the Puma will rev freely and offer a sporty drive.

The bigger engine plus extra body weight means that the Puma is six inches longer and weighs in around 50 kilos heavier than the Fiesta. That should not affect the fuel consumption too drastically though, and Ford forecasts that the Puma will need to drink a gallon of unleaded every 38 miles or so on average.

Not that potential customers for this car will be too concerned about petrol bills, for Ford will be looking for those desirable Dinkies (Double Income No Kids) couples who are now the Holy Grail of the car salesman.

On looks alone, Ford stands a good chance of attracting enough buyers to get rid of the 30,000 to 40,000 it is planning to make at its Fiesta plant at Cologne in Germany, and the Puma gives the company yet another model to add to its ever expanding line-up.

Significantly, Puma is the first Ford designed entirely by computer and in just 135 days, which means the company will be able to develop even more niche models from existing chassis at low cost and remarkably quickly.

Ford's now start with the Ka and go all the way to the big, bulky and American-made Explorer 4x4. With a mini people-mover scheduled for production at Halewood on Merseyside, Ford is clearly aiming to plug every niche gap in the market in its quest for profitability.



Ford based the Puma on Fiesta chassis, but created a novel look for the Zetec-engined coupé

How Sara's company-car driving skills beat the Road Safety Minister

Alan Copps almost tackles the tricky course at the launch of this year's Times/Lease Plan competition



Sara Copeland, our launch winner, proved the value of her employer's training policy

There could be no better illustration of the virtues of driver training. Sara Copeland is head of human resources for Habitat and, like all other employees the firm provides with a company car, she went on a one-day driving course.

So when we invited her to help launch our annual search for The Times/Lease Plan Company Car Driver of the Year, we were expecting a demonstration of skill and control. Sara provided just that: despite a degree of nervousness at forsaking her usual Audi Coupé for the Nissan Primera S1 which will be used by this year's entrants, she gave a demonstration of smooth, calm driving to beat three men around a course of cones which included two tricky three-point turns and a slalom. The catch? On the Nissan's bonnet was a large plastic saucer with a light-weight ball inside and the trick was to get round the course without spilling the ball.

Sara got round the course without hesitation in just two minutes and four seconds. Now is the chance for you or

your company to match her skill. More and more women are joining the ranks of company car drivers and we hope Sara's example will encourage many of them to take part in this year's competition.

There is a month in which companies great or small can enter for the regional heats by filling in the form below. All you need is three willing drivers, aged over 24 who have a car or use of a car provided as part of their remuneration. Each team entry has to be endorsed by a company director or fleet manager.

The finals, at the Silverstone Driving Centre, are a rare chance to experience the excitement of driving under expert supervision at the home of the British Grand Prix. The individual winner will win a trip for two to the Portuguese Grand Prix and the winning team will be offered driver training for 12 employees and the use of a Nissan vehicle for three months.



John Bowis came third

Our test course at Ham House in Southwest London was designed by Chris Howell, managing director of Drive Tech, one of Britain's leading driver-training companies, which oversees the heats of our competition and

which also trains Habitat's company car drivers.

First to try the course, in appalling weather, was John Bowis, the Minister for Road Safety, who had come to demonstrate the Government's backing for the competition, which is now in its fourth year. The contest aims to heighten awareness of the need for skill and care among those who may cover many tens of thousands of miles during a year's work.

More and more large firms are beginning to invest in training to help ease that reputation for devil-may-care driving which dogs the company car motorist. Mr Bowis and others concerned with road safety are well aware that even a few hours' instruction in anticipating the hazards of the road can dramatically reduce insurance premiums and the risk of expensive repairs or, worse, injuries and absence from work.

With the disadvantage of

being first — and although he is used to an automatic — Mr Bowis took the Nissan around the course with great skill recording a time of two minutes and ten seconds. Vahid Daemi, managing director of Lease Plan, Europe's leading vehicle management company, went round in two minutes 17 seconds and was commended by Chris Howell for his steady style. Then Sara set the pace.

Although Chris was keeping the times close to his chest, your correspondent was impressed by the speed and smoothness of all three, and realised he'd been set a hard task. The car went smoothly, the ball went round and round in the saucer and the last cone of the slalom went flying, incurring a five-second penalty.

I did manage to complete the fastest round, in exactly two minutes, but that penalty was enough to ensure that Sara proved her point.

It's a competition about safety, not speed, but even so seconds count. Fill in the form and give it a try...

Four-wheel winning driver

THE WINNER of our competition for a drive in a Land Rover at the Midland Auto Trader Four-Wheel-Drive Day on March 1 is Mrs Janet Griffith of Shrewsbury, Shropshire. She correctly answered our question: the first Land Rover was unveiled in 1948.

She wins the use of a Land Rover provided by Marshalls of Peterborough and accommodation for two over the weekend at the Haycock Hotel, Wansford, Peterborough from which the day-long event, one of the best of its kind, starts next Saturday. If you were not lucky enough to win and have access to a suitable four-wheel-drive vehicle there is still time to enter by telephoning Cranium Communications on 01780 766966. Entries close on Tuesday.

Car cover up

PAY-OUTS ON motor insurance claims last year were higher than expected and could lead to premium rises of between 5 and 10 per cent this year, according to insurers. In 1995 premiums fell by up to 20 per cent as direct insurers brought fierce competition to the market, but Touchline says they must now go up to meet the increased cost of claims.

Rather no Moss

STIRLING MOSS has asked us to point out that he will not be taking part in July's race recreation at the historic Rhéims circuit in France, as we reported on January 11. However, the organisers are still seeking entries and anyone interested should contact Trisha Pilkington on 01803 722357.

Fittipaldi festival

EMERSON FITTIPALDI, Brazil's double world champion, is to drive a Penske IndyCar as part of a large American presence at this year's Goodwood Festival of Speed in June. More information: 01243 787766.

THE TIMES
Lease Plan
Company
Car Driver
1997

About your company

Name of entrant: _____ Position: _____ Signature: _____
NB: Entrant should be director/senior manager responsible for the company's car fleet.
Company name: _____
Address: _____
Post code: _____ Tel number: _____ Fax number: _____
Nature of business: _____ Number of employees: _____ Number of company cars: _____

Nominated drivers

	Surname	Job title	Forename	Age	Points on licence (max 2)
1					
2					
3					
4					

Competition rules

The closing date for entries is March 28 1997. Drivers must be 24 years of age or over to enter. Only corporate entries will be accepted. Drivers must be nominated by the director or senior manager responsible for the company car fleet. Drivers must be nominated in teams of three. The entrant may also nominate himself/herself as part of the team. Companies can only enter one team. Competitors must drive a company car or vehicle as part of their remuneration package. Qualification for the team/company award will be dependent upon a written test to be completed by the entrant at that team's regional heat. Employees of Lease Plan, DriveTech, Nissan, News International and the Biddle Group are not permitted to enter. In the spirit of the competition, competitors who reached the final in two previous consecutive years, specialist organisations such as driver training companies, police, the armed forces and the fire are not permitted to enter. A place in the regional heats will be confirmed in writing at least ten days prior to the heat. In the event of over-subscription, qualification to the regional heats will be judged through a random driver telephone questionnaire. If the team does not qualify the entrant will be informed in writing prior to the heat. Feedback on each driver's performance will be available after the competition. The reserve driver will be called upon at the regional heat should one of the first three drivers be unable to compete. In the event of a finalist not being able to compete in the final, the next highest scoring driver from the regional heats will be invited to compete in their place. The prize for the winner will be a special trip for two to the Portuguese Grand Prix. The team/company prize will be a driver training programme for 12 employees and the use of a Nissan vehicle for three months. Cash alternatives are not available. The judge's decision is final.

Which venue?

Please select your 1st and 2nd choice location/date of regional heat (indicate 1 or 2 in box):

Elstree, Herts	Friday, 25 April	<input type="checkbox"/>
Macclesfield, Cheshire	Friday, 9 May	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bracknell, Berks	Friday, 16 May	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham	Friday, 30 May	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gatwick, Surrey	Friday, 6 June	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coventry	Friday, 13 June	<input type="checkbox"/>

You must ensure that entrant and nominated drivers are able for both first and second choice dates and for the final at Silverstone on Friday, 4 July 1997. Initial qualification may be by telephone questionnaire. Entrants and drivers will be contacted on an individual basis.

Once you have completed this form, fax it back to Lease Plan on 01753 620676

or post to Marketing Dept, Lease Plan, Thames Side, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 1TY. For further information call Lease Plan on 01753 797284

Alan Copps explores Toyota's huge range of vehicles and the niche newcomers it introduces this month



Trendiest of the small four-wheel drives: RAV4 MAX



The Hilux 4WD: now Britain's most popular pick-up



Paseo: lively coupe that was introduced last year



Rip-roaring Supra: a seriously under-rated supercar



Carina: reliable transport that is made in Britain



Camry Sport Saloon: performance car for executives



Smallest car in the Toyota range: tiny Starlet Sportif



Corolla: efficient all-round model for the family



New Land Cruiser Amazon: ultra-luxurious off-roader



Small and sporty: the cute Toyota MR2 GT



Previa GL: the largest MPV currently on the market

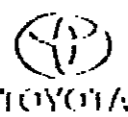


Celica GT Four: the coupé that comes with space

The most remarkable thing about Toyota in Britain is the sheer range of vehicles it offers. The launch of three new models this month means the company now has 13 different types of vehicle in its price list, ranging from the tiny Starlet mini to the roaring Supra, one of the most under-rated supercars.

In between it boasts Britain's most popular pick-up, the Hilux, a large slice of reliable family transport and the ultra-trendy RAV 4, widely considered the best of the new

MARQUE OF THE MONTH



breed of small four-wheel drives. And that is without including the company's own prestige brand, Lexus.

The new models enable the range to enter three more niche markets. The new Land Cruiser Amazon is an ultra-

luxurious version of the big four-wheel-drive which has sold more than three million worldwide since the 1950s; the Camry Sport is aimed at the executive driver who wants a bit of added performance and presence on the road, and the Picnic, which Toyota says is the pioneer of a new class, the "family fun vehicle".

The Amazon comes with full-time four-wheel-drive, a choice of petrol and diesel engines, and the top versions feature a wealth of equipment which would allow up to eight occupants to listen to the CD

player while crossing a desert in leather-cushioned, air-conditioned luxury. It will compete head-on with top-specification Range Rovers and Jeep's Grand Cherokee.

The Picnic is the first vehicle to be launched in competition for Renault's Megane Scenic, the scaled-down MPV voted Europe's Car of the Year in 1996. A number of other carmakers are planning to join the fray. The Camry gives Toyota yet another variation in one of the most hotly contested segments of the company car market.



New Picnic: competitor for Renault's Megane Scenic

LAND CRUISER AMAZON
Engines: 4.5-litre petrol or 4.1-litre diesel.
Transmission: Permanent four-wheel drive.
Equipment: power steering, ABS, air-conditioning.
Price: £36,020 - £42,855.

CAMRY SPORT
Engine: 128bhp four-cylinder, 2.2-litre, 16-valve.
Equipment: alloy-wheels, air-conditioning, ABS.
Performance: 0-62mph 10.4 seconds, max 122mph.
Price: £23,210 (£24,170 auto).

PICNIC
Engine: 2-litre, five-speed manual, four-speed auto.
Equipment: Child-proof locks, alarm.
Price: £15,870 - £19,710.



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TOYOTA SUPRA 2.0 16V 2000 cc, 170000 miles, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 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Wooden racer goes under the hammer

Alan Copps on the racing car made out of wood that took Jackie Stewart to glory

What is probably the last wooden car to win a serious motor race — it was driven by three-time world champion Jackie Stewart — is to be sold at auction today by the man who designed it.

Jem Marsh, founder of Marcos cars, says: "The only car I passed at public school was English and woodwork, so it's not surprising my first cars were made of wood. It's a tremendously light and strong material."

"You can repair it quickly, too, so long as it doesn't splinter. I once got a rear wheel off the track going round Clearways corner at Brands Hatch. I spun across the wet grass, collecting all the concrete posts from a wire retaining fence, eventually knocking the back off the car. But it came off in one piece. I glued it on again in the paddock and went on to win another race."

The 1960 gullwing-doored Marcos sports racing coupé was one of the success stories of GT racing in its time. Its weird appearance, frog eyes, notch-back and four-piece



Jem Marsh and the third Marcos he made, in 1959

windscreen, cloaked an even more peculiar chassis, a tub made of marine plywood. But the unusual construction ensured extreme light weight, and with an early Cosworth engine the car was astonishingly successful. It dominated its class until the brilliant

Colin Chapman sorted out a racing version of his glass-fibre Lotus Elite, a beautiful car that played swan to the Marcos's ugly duckling.

The car to be sold tonight at Brooks's auction at London's Olympia has an extraordinary history. "It's been part of my life," says Marsh. "It was the third car we made, chassis number 1003. I've had great fun racing it myself but my factory's so busy now I need the space. I'm hoping it might go to a museum."

The Marcos company, based in Weymouth, Dorset, and still run by Marsh and his sons, is one of Britain's most successful specialist sports car manufacturers with a full order book for its current Mantara and LM models.

The car to be sold is one of only six Mk1 GTs to be built. It carries an estimate of £20,000 — £25,000. "I drove it to Scotland where it was paid for by Barry Filer, a director of Courtaulds, and then delivered to Jackie Stewart when no one had heard of him outside Scotland. He'd done a few races in an Austin Healey Sprite, but he won some of his first races in this car," says Marsh.



Jackie Stewart won some of his first races in this car, made of marine plywood and stuck together with glue, with an early Cosworth engine

The chassis and most of the bodywork of the car is wood, mainly 1/2mm marine ply. The bonnet is made of glassfibre. The construction was pioneering at a time when even Formula One cars were still built around a space frame of steel tubing. Jackie

Stewart raced it throughout 1961 and 1962 and then moved on to higher things. It was bought by Jack Gates, who entered and won nine races. Then it disappeared. But in 1976, Jem Marsh found the car lying neglected in a garage yard. "I rebuilt it

then I started racing it myself in historic events. I've won more than 100 times in the 1300cc class." Marsh won three Historic Sports Car Club championships in the car in 1978, '80 and '84. But the last wooden Marcos was built in 1969. The com-

pany now faces a more modern challenge: preparing a three-car team for this year's 24-hour endurance race at Le Mans. "I'm still chairman of Marcos and we're now running the team from the factory," says Marsh.

Brooks's sale starts at noon at Olympia 2, London W6 0JH (0171-244 9994). Sotheby's sell a collection of Formula One memorabilia at New Bond Street, London W1 on Wednesday at 2pm (0171-408 5865).

DR DASHBOARD

Has the RAC changed sides?

Q Forgive me doctor, I always thought RAC meant Royal Automobile Club. Now I hear that they are taking up the cause of cyclists and pedestrians. Can this be true?

A You're right. At a conference earlier this week to celebrate the organisation's centenary, the RAC decided that in future it should represent all road users rather than just motorists.

Q Whatever next? Will the AA become the Anti-motorist Association? Who's going to stick up for the poor old motorist against the New Age travellers, bureaucrats and environmentalists?

A The RAC says that lots of its members walk and cycle as well as drive. And remember, the AA had its origins as a team of cyclists who warned pioneer drivers about speed traps on the London-Brighton road.

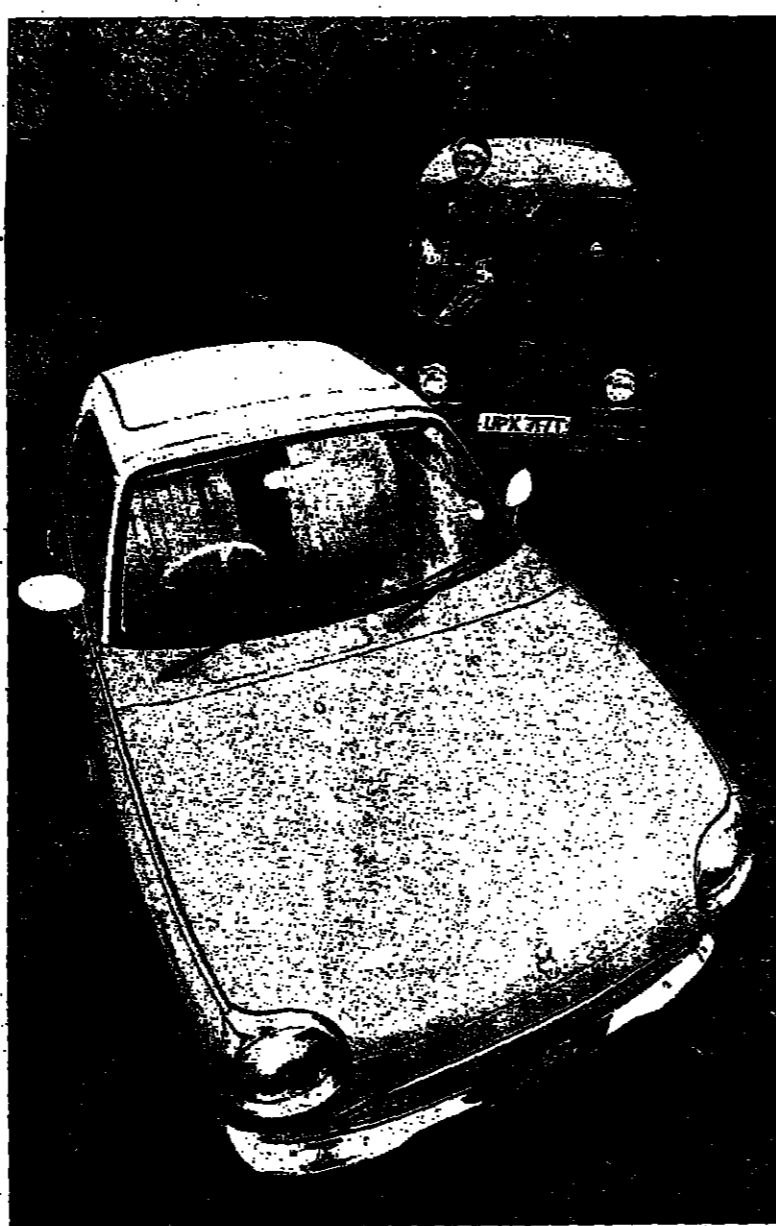
Q Well we all have to walk sometimes, but I'd rather drive any day. Does that make me old-fashioned?

A It seems so. The RAC based its decision on a poll of members that showed them strongly in favour of pedestrianisation in town centres, better public transport and more space on the roads for cyclists.

Q That sounds familiar. I seem to remember reading something along those lines in Car 97.

A That's true. Our own poll last week showed that very large numbers of motorists are saying the same thing. It's the result of an overwhelming concern about pollution and congestion in our cities. But we do believe in giving the motorist a say, so soon we'll be printing a selection of ideas put forward by driving advocates in our traffic debate.

Street-fashion creator Wayne Hemingway tells Andrew Pierce why he hates ostentatious road-users



Hemingway with rag-top Land Rover and limited-edition Nissan Figaro

Clothes king loses rag at macho adverts

Wayne Hemingway, one of Britain's most successful fashion designers, will be among the star turns at London Fashion Week which opens tomorrow. Hemingway is the creative force behind the street-wear label Red or Dead. He founded the company 15 years ago with his wife Gerardine, selling second-hand clothes in Camden market in North London. He is now creative director and chairman of the company and a self-made millionaire.

How did you first learn to drive?

I was brought up in a pub and earned enough money to buy a car at 16. I drove it round and round the car park and took my test three days after my 17th birthday. I was convinced I had taught myself. I was wrong. I failed. I passed six weeks later, having had some real lessons.

What was your first car?

A Hillman Hunter. Followed rapidly by a bright orange Capri with bucket seats and a racing steering wheel. I crashed the Hillman on the way to school.

What car do you drive now and why?

When I am being a sensible

father, I drive a Toyota Previa. For fun I have a 1950s rag-top Land Rover. I also have a limited edition Nissan Figaro which I bought in Japan.

Do you like driving?

Only if there is something good on the radio. Otherwise I find it tedious. There are far better things to do in life.

What is your most hated car?

Ostentatious status symbols such as the Rolls-Royce. It is ugly and screams out: boring old rich fart. Modern Porsches are the ultimate laughable status symbol.

What is your dream car?

One that can fly and is amphibious at the same time.

What is your worst habit in the car?

Not supporting my wife, Gerardine, when she is driving and screaming at the kids to behave. I just keep on reading a magazine.

What infuriates you most about other drivers?

I love all of them. I have road happiness.

What is the most unusual thing you have done in your car?

I changed a fuse on my own, only last week. This was highly unusual.

Have you ever had points on your licence?

When I was 17, doing 50mph on a 40mph urban motorway. All my mates were drunk and rowdy. The policeman was incredulous at my explanation that I had drunk four bottles of chocolate milk. He breath-tested me. Then my mates gave him four empty bottles of chocolate milk. He nicked me for speeding instead.

What do you listen to in the car?

Radio 1: the evening show with Jo Wiley and Steve Lamacq. Football on Radio 5 Live.

If you were Secretary of State for Transport, what is the first thing you would do?

A dramatic increase in car tax, and road tolls that encouraged everyone who can to use a public transport system that has been improved by the levies.

What is your favourite car advertisement?

The directors of the commercials seem to think that all car drivers lust after speed and regard the car as a penis extension. Unlike me.

CAR... TOONS



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Boring road puts drivers to sleep

By Paul Marston, Transport Correspondent

A STRETCH of dual carriageway suspected of being so boring that it makes drivers fall asleep is to be investigated by the Government's Highways Agency.

The eastbound route of the A180 between the outskirts of Scunthorpe and Grimsby Docks has a sleep-related accident rate two-and-a-half times the national average.

Research carried out by Loughborough University for Humberside police suggested that drivers tended to relax because they were nearing the end of their journey, and then had difficulty in staying awake because the road was so unstimulating.

Prof Jim Horne, head of the university's sleep research team, said that the view along the 20-mile road was exceptionally tedious.

"It's pretty dull and boring, and often not very busy, so drivers don't even have the stimulation of other traffic to keep them going," he said. "It's also very flat, and a lot of

it has embankments running alongside. At night, it's not lit, so you can't see much."

Maybe it's just their cars.

The Daily Telegraph 11/2/97

